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Rome  
and  
**The Negro**  
—

Written by  
**William J. Reed**  
Louisville, Ky.



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# ROME AND THE NEGRO

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Lives of the noted African Bishops, Saints,  
Martyrs, Holy Women and  
Fathers of Deserts.

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Taken from the Lives of the Saints  
Roman and African Calenders.

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LOUISVILLE, KY.

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*"Remember the rock from whence you are hewed."*

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## **Dedication.**

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I dedicate this little work to the Immaculate Queen of Heaven, to my patron Saint Anthony of Padua, and in memory of my lamented benefactor, Archabbott Wimmer, St. Vincent's Abbey, Beatty's Station, Pa.

Trusting whatever merit is found, or good accomplished by it, may redown to the greater honor and glory of God and His Church.

W. J. REED,  
The Feast of the Assumption,  
St. Mary's, Ky.

August 15, 1906.

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## Preface.

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The object of this little work is to show what the Catholic Church has done for the Negro, by recording the events, names, places and lives of the most illustrious black men in the Church's History.

My chief aims, in presenting the lives and deeds of these holy men, to the Catholic, are not only to know, love and venerate; but to inspire an ardent desire to imitate their holy example.

To bring before my colored brethren who are earnestly seeking the truth, the fact that the Catholic Church is not a respecter of persons; that she is the friend of the poor and oppressed; that our brother in white has not any mortgage on virtue; that in their search for light, they may make a historical review of the Church, and see what she has done, and is doing for the race. Compare her acts, with the acts of the various other sects, and the Catholic Church will not suffer by ultimate results.

It is to illustrate to our brother in white the fact, while the Negro has been an important factor in the world politics, by the grace of God, he has been more so, in His holy

Church: That under the same black skin, the light which has been hidden for centuries, is still as brilliant, as in past ages. All we ask of our white brother is his forebearance and sincere prayers, if this is granted, may we not safely say what has happened will happen again? Yes, let us with every confidence, trust that ere long the clouds which over shadow the true pathway of the Negro, will be removed by the gentle breeds of God's breath. Quid times? Caesarem vehis, which Caesar said with presumption. Christ says with truth, "What fearest thou? Christ is in the ship."

I do not write this because it is my own, but because it is true, not for victory, but for truth.

W. J. REED, P.



**PART I.**  
**THE PAST.**

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**CHAPTER I.**  
**THE CALL.**

What Rome or the Catholic Church has done for the whole world, has been done in a special manner for the Negro or African. He was among the first to adore and offer presents to the Saviour of the World; As related by the Gospel, he was among the first converted by the preaching of St. Peter, the head of the Church. He helped to form one single community of believers, that confessed the same faith, joined in the same worship, and listened to the same doctrine.

By the command of an angel, St. Philip instructed and baptized an Ethiopian Eunuch, a proselyte, who had come to Jerusalem to worship.

In obedience to the Divine command, "Go ye, therefore, Matt. xxvii-19 and teach all nations", the Apostle St. Matthew after the Ascension, preached the Gospel in Ethiopia, where he suffered martyrdom. Egypt was converted by St. Simon of Coma, surnamed the Zealott. St. Peter the Bishop of Bishops, like his Divine Master, with the power given

him by Christ, sends St. Mark to found the Church and preach the Gospel in Alexandria; That the seed had taken root, as early as A. D. 44, is attested by Tertullian and others. From the Christian metropolis of all Egypt, Nubia, Ethiopia and neighboring countries, Christianity spread rapidly to the northern portion of Africa, including Proconsular Africa, Numidia, Mauritania. The exact time of the introduction of Christianity is in doubt, but that missionaries were sent from Rome by St. Peter is certain. We are informed by Tertullian, "that about the year 202 the Christians contributed nearly the majority in every city."

Not enough to call the Negro or African out of darkness and superstition, to the knowledge of the true faith, but God through the voice of His Church destined him to take a leading part in the formation, and government of His Church. Next to Rome, Africa during the first five centuries was foremost in the defense of the doctrine of the Church, through her Bishops, and councils, leading in her schools of Christian doctrine, famous for her Catholic men of learning, noted for her Martyrs, while her deserts were filled with Hermits and Holy women, her cities, towns, and villages with stately Churches erected to the honor and glory of God, and from almost every heart went up to the Most High, "What

shall I render unto the Lord, for what He has done unto us," or "Non currentis, neque volentis, sed miserentis est Dei." "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."



## CHAPTER II.

### NOTED MEN.

#### CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHERS.

Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Julius Africanus, Origen, Mimeius, Felix, who by their writings in defense of Christ and His Church have been and are among the greatest tribunes of African genius.

#### TERTULLIAN.

Tertullian, born about the year 160, confesses that before his conversion to the Christian faith, he, in his merry fits pointed his keenest satiree against it (apol 18), had been an adulterer (De Resur 59), had taken a cruel pleasure in the bloody entertainments of the Amphitheatre, attained to a distinguishing eminency in vice, and was an accomplished sinner in all respects, yet having his head marvellously well turned for science he applied himself to the study of every branch of good literature, poetry, philosophy, geometry, physic, and oratory; he dived into the principles of each sect, and both into the fabulous and into the real or historieal part of mythology. One of such a head and mind, after examining the Antiquity of the Mosaic writings, the mighty works and wisdom of the divine lawgiver, the continued chain of prophecy and wonders conducting the inquirer

to Christ, the evidence of the miracles of Christ and His Apostles, the excellency of the law of the gospel, and amazing influence upon the lives of men; the power which every Christian there exercised over evil spirits, and the testimony of the very devils themselves whom the infidels worshiped for gods, and who turn preachers of Christ howling, and confessing themselves devils in the presence of their own votaries, also the constancy and patience of the Martyrs, could no longer resist the voice of God nor his grace. His conversion took place in mature age, about the year 190 in his native city Carthage, he was ordained priest soon after. He was a man of remarkably strong intellect and character. As a writer he was profound and fruitful, showed great acuteness and dialectic dexterity. Tertullian was the most ancient of all ecclesiastical writers among the Latins, also one of the most learned. St. Vincent of Lerius, calls him, the first man of his age. "St. Cyprian is said to have never past a day without reading him, and when he called for his book, he used to say, "Give me my master". Far from shading the blemishes of this great man who failed to correspond to the graces which God bestowed upon him, we can only apply to him what he himself has written; "What if a bishop, a deacon, a widow, a virgin, a teacher, or even a martyr, shall fall from the faith: Do

we judge of the faith of the persons or of the persons by their faith? No man is wise who holds not the faith."

DIOGMUS.

Diogmus the blind was born in the year 309, lost his sight when only four yers old, nevertheless he learned the Alphabet from raised letters, and became deeply versed in the sciences divine and human, he was one of the most learned of his time, Origen, Mimcius Felix, Octavius "which demonstrates the existence of one only true God.



### CHAPTER III.

#### NOTED AFRICAN SCHOOLS AND COUNCILS.

The great African schools, that were famous for learning in the Pagan world, soon became renowned and zealous in the cause of Christianity. Among the best known schools of Christian Philosophy, was Alexandria, founded by St. Mark, it counted such men as Pantaemus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen. Heraclas, Dionysius the great, Pierius surnamed the younger Oregon, Achilles, Peter the Martyr and others who became famous. The great and renowned school of Hippo founded by St. Agustine, in 401, that he might better oppose the then reigning heresy; by his learning, eloquence, modesty, courtesy, and sanctity of life; which school became the Mecca of the world. The schools of Carthage, Tunis, Cirtha, and Tagaste. In these schools the reading and explanation of the Sacred Scriptures formed the principal part of instruction, aside from the many tens of thousand who attended the schools, countless numbers reached the highest places within the gift of the Church.

In the great councils of the Church, Africa held the foremost rank in condemning heresy, and making laws by which the Church was governed. In the year 235, a council of African Bishops met in Alexandria to the number of

twenty, in the year 251 seventy-one, and again in the year 256, eighty-seven Bishops, convened at Carthage; Whilst a previous council met at Lambesa in Numidia consisting of ninety Bishops presided over by St. Cyprian condemning the schisms of Novatus and Felicissimus, the last council was confirmed by Pope Cornelius, it was at or about this time that St. Cyprian wrote his excellent work, on the Unity of the Church. The Council of Carthage with two hundred Bishops condemned the Pelagrian heresy.



## CHAPTER IV.

### AFRICAN POPES.

The Church like her Divine founder, is not a respecter of persons. The more one becomes detached from the things of the world, and the closer he resembles his Divine Model, and Master, the more worthy will he be deserving the highest dignity within the gift of the Church. Of the seventy-nine successors of St. Peter, who are invoked as saints eminent for their holiness, two are Negroes or Africans.

### POPE ST. VICTOR.

St. Victor Pope and martyr was a native of Africa, and succeeded St. Eleutherius in the year 192, he was a true successor of the Apostles. "A spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men", and no one could point out a stain on his moral character He practiced in a heroic degree the virtues necessary to such an exalted position. His opposition to the rising heresies of his age, made him noted for courage. A Tanner, named Theodotus of Bysantium, apostatized from the faith to save his life in the late persecution, afterward, to extenuate his guilt pretended that he had denied only the man, not God, teaching that Christ was nothing more than a man, as the Socinianus teach at this day, whereas the Arians

allowed him to have been before the world  
though himself a creature.

Theodotus going to Rome, drew many into his blasphemous error, being well versed in polite literature, but Victor checked his progress by excommunicating him, with Ebion Artemon, and another Theodotus who had taught the same blasphemy. Mantanus, a new convert in Mysia, near Phrygia, out of an unbounded desire of invading the first dignity of the Church, and filled with rage to see himself disappointed, began to preach against the Church, and having his pride and ambition given entrance to the devil, commenced false prophecy, and sometimes losing his senses, began in an enthusiastic strain to utter extraordinary expressions. Montanus placed himself above the apostles saying that he had received the Paraclete or Holy-Ghost promised by Christ, to perfect his law. St. Victor was watchful to cut off these and other scandals in their roots, and everywhere to maintain the purity of the faith with unity. He decided the dispute regarding the time of celebrating Easter. Also that common water might be used in case of necessity in baptism. After a glorious reign of ten years, he is said to have suffered martyrdom about the year 201.

### POPE CALIXTUS, THE FIRST.

St. Calixtus the first was born in slavery, and suffered all the hardships incidental to such a life, nevertheless by the grace of God, he was raised to the dignity of Pope, he governed the Church during the reign of Heliogabalus, from the year 218-222, by his zeal and watchfulness, he condemned the Antitrinitarian heresy of Sabellius, as also the ditheistic doctrine of Hippolitus, who, falling into the opposite extreme made the Son inferior to the Father. After a short but glorious reign, with the palm of victory in his hand, he suffered martyrdom A. D. 222.



## CHAPTER V.

### AFRICAN OR NEGRO BISHOPS OF THE CHURCH.

#### ST. AUGUSTINE, BISHOP OF HIPPO.

The most illustrious among the doctors of the Church, St. Augustine, was born in the year 304, at Tagastè, Africa, a small town in Numidia, not far from Hippo. Notwithstanding the prudent conduct and holy example of his mother St. Monica, he had the misfortune to fall into the most frightful gulf of vice and spiritual miseries. If we pursued him in his youth through all those mazes in which he wondered, and bewildered himself so long, it is only that we may learn to discover and shun the snares and dangers with which we are encompassed. When he had learned to speak and launched further out into the tempestuous society of human life, though as yet wholly depending on the authority of his parents, and beck of elders, he multiplied his sins and miseries. He was instructed in the Christian religion, and taught to pray by his pious mother. He was made a catechumen by being marked with the sign of the cross, and by blessed salt being put in his mouth, whilst he went to school in his own town, falling dangerously ill, he desired baptism, and his mother, made

every preparation for it, but he suddenly grew better, and it was deferred. This dangerous custom of deferring baptism of infants has not only been condemned most justly by St. Augustine, himself, but the Church has long since forbidden the deferring of infant baptism.

His father a wordly man, and an idolater, perceived that his son Augustine had excellent genius, and a wonderful disposition for learning, and with a view to his future preferment, spared nothing to breed him up a scholar. After attending school in his native town, he was sent to Madura, a neighboring city, where he studied grammar, poetry, and rhetoric. When he was sixteen years old, his father recalled him to Tagastè, designing to send him to finish his studies at Carthage, having remained at home a whole year, he went to Carthage at the beginning of the seventeenth year of his age, and year 370. There he easily held the foremost place in the school of rhetoric, and applied himself to his studies with so much eagerness and pleasure, that it was with great difficulty that he was drawn from them. Having read an exhortation concerning philosophy entitled Hortensius by Cicero, he became inflamed with a great desire of love of wisdom, and filled with a contempt of riches and honors, from that time laid aside all expectation of magistracies and wordly preferment. Hearing the masters speak so highly of Aristotle's book

of the categories or predicaments; he eagerly read and understood it, without a master.

He at last grew weary of Cicero's Hortensius, and the books of the heathen philosophers, because Christ whose name he had suck in as it were, with his mother's milk, and deeply retained was not mentioned in them. His mind turned to the Holy Scriptures; but he was offended with the simplicity of their style, and swelling with pride as if he was imbued with a great genius, he could not relish their humility, or penetrate their spirit. Soon after this he fell into the sect of the Mamelches, in which he continued from his nineteenth to the twenty-eighth year of his age. Vice strangely degrades and infatuates the mind, creates an utter distaste and loathing of spiritual things, and renders the soul incapable of raising her thoughts and affections to heavenly objects; this dreadful blindness together with pride accounts for the fall of so great a genius as Augustine into the most monstrous of heresies. "I sought with pride," says he, "what only humility could make me find. Fool that I was, I left the nest imagining myself able to fly, and I fell to the ground". To-day as in those days, heretics object to all supernatural truth, and refuse to acquiesce in the testimony of God, manifested by the authority of the Church, derived him, guided by his unerring spirit, in conserving unviolated his

divine revelations, of which we have the strongest assurances given us by the same revelation confirmed to us by evident miracles, and other motives of credibility, to which, upon an impartial review, no one can prudently refuse to assent. His frequent disputations with several Catholics, in which, by the subtilty of his wit, and quickness in reasoning, he seemed unhappily victorious, swelled his heart with pride. He had attained to a perfect understanding of most of the liberal sciences at scarce twenty years of age, but as he himself said: "What did it profit me, when indeed it did me harm?" In his twentieth year, he left Carthage and returned to Tagaste, and opened a school of grammar and rhetoric, being intoxicated with the novelty of his heresy, and bloated with conceit; his mother being a good Catholic, ceased not to weep and pray for his conversion, forbore to sit at the same table or to eat with him, thinking by this severity and abhorrence of his heresy, that he would enter into himself. Seeking honor and glory, he left his native country, and went to the capitol of Africa, Carthage, he opened a school of rhetoric, gained great applauses in the public disputations, and carried away the principle prizes, in the theatre, for the best performances in poesy and oratory, notwithstanding this popular glory, the shouts of the theatre, the mind is ill at ease, "What am I to myself without

thee, but my own guide falling headlong down a precipice." St. Augustine now began to be disgusted with certain teachings of his sect, and after having several conferences with a Manichaean bishop, named Faustus, from whom he received so little satisfaction, that he from thence forward disapproved of the entire teachings of his sect. Nevertheless, like many today, his prepossessions against the Catholic faith hindered him from turning his enquiries on that side, Augustine, whilst he remained in this state of fluctuation of mind, being displeased with the behavior of the students of Carthage, resolved to go to Rome. This journey he took without his mother's consent, here in he praises the divine goodness, which, by his irregularities themselves, brought him to their cure; by afflicting his mother, and refusing to hear her present request, by which she prayed that her son might not sail, God made her redouble her earnestness and tears that he might accomplish the main thing which she alawys requested, the conversion of her son.

At Rome he professed rhetoric, his school was frequented by the most famous wits of that age, all were struck with admiration at his learning, and by the natural sweetness of his temper, yet he grew weary of the place, and accepted a place as master of rhetoric in the court of the emperor Valentinian the younger, of Milan. At Milan he received the great ap-

pliance of the most ingenuous persons. The holy Bishop St. Ambrose, paid him marked attention, St. Augustine desired the acquaintance of St. Ambrose more as a person of learning and reputation and one who was obliging and friendly to him, than a teacher of truth which he thought impossible to be found among Catholics. On hearing the great Bishop explain the divine truths, his heart began to melt, He seemed to hear the divine voice crying to him from on high, “I am the meat of those that are grown up, grow thou up, and thou shalt feed upon me, neither shall thou convert me unto thee like thy corporeal food, but thou shalt be changed into me.” He betook himself to reading the New Testament, especially the writings of St. Paul, in which he took great delight, herein he saw the glory of heaven displayed, and the way clearly pointed out which leadeth us thither; he perceived an infinite difference between the doctrine of him who styled himself the last of the apostles, and that of those proud philosophers who esteemed themselves the greatest of men. Augustine was convinced of the truth and excellence of the virtue, which the divine law prescribes in the Catholic Church, but prejudice prevented him from entering upon it. After addressing himself to a holy priest of Milan who wonderfully enlightened his mind, it happened in the meantime that he met one by name Pontitianus, an

African, a very religious man, who by his good example, and powerful discourse, had a great effect on the mind of Augustine, it raised strong emotions in his breast, and he saw as it were in a glass, his own filthiness and deformity, which caused him to loathe and abhor himself, he sat down and groaned in bitter indignation against himself. He cried out to God, "Come, let it now be done, let it be done this moment," and again he cried out to God to this purpose, "How long, O Lord! wilt thou be angry for ever? Remember not my past iniquities." Hearing all of a sudden a voice like that of a child saying, "Tolle lege, Tolle lege." "Take and read, Take and read." Obeying the voice, he picked up the epistles of St. Paul, opened it and read, "Not in revelling and drunkenness; not in chamberings and impurities, not in strife and envy, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscence." At the end of these lines a stream of joy and confidence flowed into his heart, all the darkness of his former hesitation was dispelled, and his conversion was complete, which occurred in the year 386, the thirty-second year of his age. Augustine now prepared himself with extraordinary devotion for the sacrament of baptism, which he received from the hands of St. Ambrose on Easter eve, 387, together with his dear friend and countryman, Alipinus and his

son Adeodatus, to the great joy and consolation of his mother, who had prayed for that occasion. Augustine returned after the death of his mother to Tagaste, and after settling his paternal estate on the church of that city, he then founded the religious order of Hermits about the year 388. He was ordained priest in 390, at Hippo, and consecrated bishop of Hippo in December 395, the forty-second year of his age. In this new dignity he imitated the apostles, his clothes and furniture were modest, descent not slovenly. No silver was used in his house, except spoons. His dishes were of earth, wood or marble. He exercised hospitality, but his table was frugal, besides herbs and pulse, some flesh was served up for strangers and the sick, nor was wine wanting, but a quantity was regulated, which no guest was ever allowed to exceed.

At table he loved rather reading or literary conference than secular conversation, and to warn his guests to shun detraction, he had the following distich written upon his table: "This board allows no vile detractor place, whose tongue shall the absent with disgrace." He suffered no woman ever to converse in his house; not even his sister, who was superior of a convent, nor his two nieces, who served God with her; he never spoke to a woman without being in the presence of some of his clerks. No age has ever afforded a great ex-

ample of perfect disinterestedness. No man was ever endowed by nature with a more affectionate and friendly soul, his love for the poor, and distressed, his zeal and charity for the spiritual welfare of others, seemed to have no bounds. "I desire not to be saved without you," said he to his people, like another Moses or St. Paul. "What shall I desire? What shall I say? But to live in him with you. This is my passion, my glory, my joy, and riches." The epistles of great men are often interesting and curious both for illustrating their history, and giving a true portraiture of their mind. Those of St. Augustine are particularly so, not only on these accounts, but also for the importance of the subjects treated in them. It would be tedious to mention all the important points of faith and discipline which he discusses in many of his epistles. We can find nothing more agreeable, than the perfect maxims of Christian virtue, which he inculcates. The learning and zeal with which he wrote in defense of the Church doctrine is fully attested in his many works, especially, his book on The Advantage of Believing. In this book he refutes the Manichean principle that the light of reason suffices to discover to us the truth, without faith or the use of authority. His book treating "of two souls", combating the Manichees heresy. That every man has two souls, the one good, and the other evil. Two books

against Felix, concerning the nature of God, and the origin of evil. His publications against the Arians in 417, 428. One of his most profound works is his fifteen books, "On the Trinity" 400 to 416, his great work "The City of God" consists of twenty-two books, is an apology for the Christian religion. His book, against lying was composed about the year 420. He shows us that we are bound oft-times to conceal the truth, but must never prevent any evils by lying. His work "On the Advantage of Matrimony," on which he shows that state to be holy. The book, "On Holy Virginity," proving it to be the more perfect, provided, it is embraced for the sake of God. His treatise, "On Continency", was written to show that this virtue consists in subduing the passions, and that sins do not proceed from a principle that is evil by nature in us. The two books that do most honor to our Saint's name are those of his Confession and Retractation, in the former of which, with the most sincere humility and compunction, he lays open the errors of his conduct, and in the latter those of his Judgment. The Vandals under Genseric, with an army of four score thousand men, sailed from Spain into Africa in May, 428, and destroyed many cities, and the inhabitants being either slain or fled, some sunk under the torture, others perished by the sword, others groaned in captivity, being become slaves to

brutal and cruel enemies, and many lost the purity of their body, and faith. Amidst this universal desolation, St. Augustine mourned with a sense of the miseries of his country, while he deeply considered not only the outward calamnities of his people, but also the ruin of a multitude of souls, that was likely to ensue, and he prayed often and importunately that God would deliver his country, or at least would give his servants constancy and resignation, and that he would receive him to himself, that he might not be an idle spectator of so great evils. In June 430 our Saint was seized with a fever, and from the first moment of his illness doubted not but it was a summons of God who called him to himself, and his last illness, he spoke of his passage with great cheerfulness, saying, "we have a merciful God". He was not able to constrain within his breast the desires of his soul, in which he sighed after the glorious day of eternity, when we shall behold and possess God our sovereign good, the object of all our desires. He thus expresses his signs with David, "Till I shall come, till I appear before him, I cease not to weep, and these tears are sweet to me as food. With this thirst with which I am consumed, with which I am ardently carried towards the fountain of my love, whilst my joy is delayed, I continually burn more and more vehemently." In the prosperity of the world no less

than in adversity, I pour forth tears of this ardent desire, which never languishes or abates. "When it is well with me as to the world, it is ill with me till I appear before the face of my God". Not to be interrupted in these devotions he desired about ten days before his death, that no one should come to him except when the physicians come or his food was brought to him. Though the strength of his body daily and hourly declined yet his senses and intellectual faculties continued sound to the last. This great Saint and man of God, the greatest of all the Fathers, and the worthiest divine the Church, of God ever had since the apostles time, having lived seventy-six years, and having spent almost forty of them in the labors of the ministry, resigned his spirit into the hands of his Creator, from whom he had received it on the 28th of August, 430. O Augustine the fairest flower in the garden of the Church, A sparkling jewel in the midst of her treasures.

#### ST. CYPRIAN, B. CARTHAGE.

The name of St. Cyprian, in the age in which he lived, like that of St. Augustine, was alone the highest eulogium and panegyric, it raised in all persons the most exalted idea and commanded the most profound respect. St. Cyprian the perfect model of penitents, the

triumphed champion of our holy faith and con-founder of heresies, was born about the third century. He was a native of Carthage. He made great improvements in philosophy and all the liberal arts, applied himself to the study of oratory and eloquence with great success, and was made public professor of rhetoric at Carthage. The far greater part of his life he passed in the errors of paganism, and he was advanced in years when rescued from darkness and the servitude of vice and errors. He describes, in his book to Donatus, the struggle which he felt within himself as follows: "I lay," says he, "in darkness, and I floated on the boisterous sea of this world a stranger to the light, and uncertain where to fix my feet." I then thought what I was told of a second birth, and the method of salvation by it, propounded by the divine goodness, extremely hard and impractical I could not conceive how a man could receive the principles of a new life from the sacred laver of regeneration, cease to be what he was before, become quite a new person, and though still retaining the same bodily constitution, put off the old man, and be entirely renewed in the spirit of his mind. For how (thought I to myself) is so great an alteration possible or practicable? How shall I do to leave off on a sudden and in an instant, radicated customs, in which I am grown old? How can one who remains still in the midst of

these objects which have so long struck and charmed his senses, strip himself of all his former inclinations and inverate habits?

These time and continuance have made natural to me, and they are closely riveted in the very frame of my being. When is it known that a person is transformed into an example of constant frugality and sobriety, who has been always accustomed to sumptuous and dainty fare, to live in plenty, and to indulge his appetites without restrain? How rarely does a man become content with plain apparel and unornamented dress, who hath been used to sparkle in gold and jewels, and embroidered garments! The man of ambitious views, who pleases himself, and glories in the ensigns of power and authority, can never love an inglorious private life. In like manner, there is almost a necessity, that wine should engage, that pride should swell, that anger should inflame, that greediness of gain should devour, that ambition should amuse and please, and that lust should tyrannize over a man who hath long indulged such inclinations. These and such as these were frequently my soliloquies, for as I was deeply entangled and ensnared in the errors of my former life I judged it impossible for me ever to disengage myself from them. I gave way to the solicitations of my usual vices, added strength to them by indulgence, and despairing of any possible cure.

hugged the chain which was become natural to me, so that I looked upon it as a part of myself.

But as soon as the life giving waters of baptism had washed out the spots of my soul, my heart had received the light of the heavenly truth, the spirit of God had descended upon me, and I was thence become a new creature. presently all my difficulties were surprisingly cleared, my doubts were resolved, and all my former darkness was dispelled. Things appeared easy to me, which before I looked upon as difficult and discouraging. I was convinced that I was able to do and suffer all that which heretofore had seemed impossible. I then saw that the earthly principle which I derived from my first birth, exposed me to sin and death, but that new principle which I had received from the Spirit of God, in his spiritual birth, gave me new ideas and inclinations and directed all my views to God. Cecilius, a holy priest, was the happy instrument, in the hands of God, who by his discourses, and edifying example caused this change and conversion. St. Cyprian after his conversion, set himself with great eagerness to reading the Holy Scriptures, and to inform himself of all those lessons which would be of use to him, in his great design of obtaining God's favor. Soon after his baptism he sold his whole estate, and gave almost all the money to the poor. With the study of

the Holy Scriptures he joined that of their best expositors, and in a short time became acquainted with the most approved ecclesiastical writers. He was delighted with the writings of his countryman Tertillian, scarce passed a day without reading something in them, and when he called for them used to say. "Reach hither my master". But though he admired his genius, and the variety of his learning he was upon his guard not to imitate any of his faults or errors. Our Saint led a retired penitential life, and by the fervor of his conversion made such wonderful progress in the exercises of a virtuous life, that whilst he was yet in the ranks of the Neophytes or persons lately baptized, at the earnest request of the people he was raised to the priesthood. The short time that he served the Church in the sacerdotal functions he accomplished many great things, and within less than a year after, Donatus, bishop of Carthage, dying, the clergy and people conspired to demand him for their Bishop. He declined, but they insisted, so that to the great joy of all he was consecrated with the unanimous approbation of the bishops of the provideuce in the year 248. St. Cyprian labored incessantly, ever watchful of his flock, combating and confounding the heretics, giving comfort to the poor and distressed, and encouraging the confessors and the martyrs to martyrdom. Like St. Augustine his writings

live after him. The most noted are his book, "On the Vanity of Idols". Two books entitled, "Testimonials against the Jews". In the former, he confutes heathen Polytheism; in the latter he shows the old law was to be superseded by the new, and explains the doctrine regarding the person of Christ. Besides eighty-one letters, he wrote thirteen other works on various subjects. Pope Xystus sent a message from Rome to advise St. Cyprian of the new and bloody edicts that were soon to be published. No sooner had they been published than Pope Xystus was sacrificed on the 6th of August, 258, about a month before St. Cyprian our Saint, received from Rome information of his martyrdom, and that the order which Valerian sent to the senate, imported, "that bishops, priests, and deacons should forthwith suffer". From that time the Saint lived in daily expectation of the executioners arriving to take off the heads of such as were marked out for victims. He devoted his time to penance, and made heavenly contemplation the favorite employment of his retirement, by which he raised his soul to God by the most inflamed love, and longing desires and prayers to be united to Him for ever more, according to the maxim which he lays down in close of his book, on Mortality, where he says, "To this delightful society of the blessed, and to Christ who is at the head of it, let us hasten,

my brethren, upon the wings of desire and of holy love. Let God and Christ be witnesses, that this is the main bent of our wishes, and the sum of our most ardent hopes, then our rewards will be proportioned to the earnestness of our present desires, if they proceed from His love". The news being circulated that St. Cyprian was taken, the city was alarmed, even the pagans flocked to testify their compassion. Having been guarded by the chief officers, in a courteous manner, he was conducted by a guard to the court of the proconsul, the proconsul being seated on his tribunal, he ordered the martyr to be brought before him, and said, "Art thou Thascius Cyprian?" The martyr answered, "I am". "Art thou the person who hast been bishop and father to men of ungodly minds?" Cyprian, "I have been their Bishop." Proconsul, "The most sacred emperors have commanded thee to conform to the ceremonies of the Roman religion." Cyprian, "I cannot." Proconsul, "Consider better of thy safety." Cyprian, "obey your orders. In so manifestly just case there is no need of consideration." Proconsul, "Long hast thou lived with an irreligious heart, and hast joined great numbers with thee in an unnatural conspiracy against the Roman deities and their holy rites, nor have our sacred and most pious emperors, Valerian and Gallien, always august, nor the most noble Caesar Valerian, been able to reclaim

thee to their ceremonies. Since thou hast been a ring leader in crimes of such heinous nature, thou shalt be made an example to those whom thou hast seduced to join with thee, and discipline shall be established in thy blood." Then he read the following sentence written in a tablet, "I will that Thascius Cyprian be beheaded." To which Cyprian subjoined, "Blessed be God for it". The Christians who were present in crowds, said, "Let us be beheaded with him", and they made a great uproar. When the Martyr went out of the court a great number of soldiers attendede him, and he was guarded by centurions and tribunes marching on each side of him. St. Cyprian being arrived at the place appointed took off his mantle, fell upon his knees and prostrated himself before God. Then he put off his Dalmatic, which he gave to the deacons, and remained in a linen vestment or shirt expecting the executioners to whom he ordered a sum of twenty-five golden denarii, amounting to about six pounds, English, or thirty dollars, to be given. He himself bound the napkin over his eyes, and he desired a priest and deacon to tie his hands. The Christians spread before him napkins and handkerchiefs to receive his blood and body. His head was struck off on the 14th of September 258. It is a maxim of our holy faith, that we must follow the saints now in desire, if we hope to reign with them hereafter.

ST. ZENO, BISHOP OF VERONA.

That St. Zeno, Bishop of Verona who is styled a martyr by St. Gregory the Great, was an African is proven by Ballerim, and also confirmed by his panegyric on St. Arcadius, a martyr of Mauritania. Our Saint was made bishop of Verona, in the year 362, in the reign of Julian the Apostate. His sermons tell us, that he baptized every year a great number of idolaters, and that he exerted himself with great zeal, and success against the Arians whose party had been exceedingly strengthened in those parts by the favor of the emperor Constantius, and the artifices of the ringleaders of that sect, Ursacius and Valens, and particularly of Auxentius, who held the see of Milan, into which the heretics had intruded him, for twenty years, till 374. He also opposed himself as a strong bulwark against the errors of the Pelagians. The church of Verona was purged by his zealous labors and holy prayers in a great measure both of heresy and idols.

His flock being grown exceedingly numerous, he found it necessary to build a great church, which he was liberally assisted by the voluntary contributions of the rich citizens.

In this church he mentions a cross of wood erected, as it were, to defend the doors. By the precepts and example of their good pastor the people were liberal in their alms, their houses were always open to poor strangers, and

none of their own country had occasion even to ask for relief, so plentiful were the necessities of all prevented, and he congratulated them upon the interest which they accumulated in heavenly money bestowed on the poor by which they not only subdued avarice, but converted its treasures to the highest advantage, and without exciting envy. “For what can be richer than a man to whom God is pleased to acknowledge himself debtor?” His charity was not only for the living, but it extended to the faithful departed, and he severely condemned the intemperate grief of those who interrupted by lamentations the divine sacrifices and public office of the church for their deceased friends, which the priests performed by apostolic tradition at the death and funerals of those who slept in Christ. The fire and spirit of the African writers are very remarkable in his sermons of which there exists over one hundred and twenty-seven, in the libraries of the Fathers, by a happy death, in the year 380, on the 12. of April, on which day he is commemorated in the Roman martyrology. Two centuries after his death the following miracle is related of him, by St. Gregory the Great, and which he learned from John the Patrician, who was an eyewitness, with King Autharis and Count Promelphus. In the year 589, at the same time that the Tiber overflowed a considerable quarter of Rome, and the flood overtopped the

walls the waters of thee Adige, which falls from a mountain with excessive rapidity, threatened to drown a great part of the city of Verona. The people flocked in crowds to the Church of their holy patron Zeno. The waters seemed to respect its doors, they gradually swelled as high as the windows, yet the flood never broke into the church, but stood like a firm wall remains, as when the Israelites passed the Jordan, and the people remained twenty-four hours in prayer, till the water subsided within the banks of the channel. This prodigy had many witnesses as there were inhabitants of Verona. The devotion of the people to St. Zeno was much increased by this and other miracles.

#### ST. ANTHONASIUS, BISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA.

No greater eulogy or more fitting words of praise can be used to express the esteem in which this great saint was held than those used by St. Gregory Nazianzen. He says, "When I praise Athanasius, virtue itself is my theme, for I name every virtue as often as I mention him who was possessed of all virtue. He was the true pillar of the church. His life and conduct were the rule of bishops and his doctrine the rule of the Orthodox faith." St. Athanasius, a native of Alexandria, was born

in the year 296. His parents, who were Christians and noted for their virtue, were solicitous to procure him the best education. After he had learned grammar and the first elements of sciences under St. Alexander, who was much delighted with the virtuous deportment of the youth and with the pregnancy of his wit, took upon himself the special direction of his studies, brought him under his own eye, always made him eat with him, and employed him as his secretary. By writing under so great a master, he acquired the most elegant, easy, and methodical manner of composition. Profane science he only learned as far as they were necessary, or might be rendered subservient to those that are most sublime and important but from their aid he contracted an elegant, clear, methodical, and masterly style, and was qualified to enter the lists in defense of our holy faith with the greatest advantage. The sacred studies of religion and virtue he made the serious employment of his whole life. How much he exceeded in them, the history and perusal of his works show. That he might neglect no branch of ecclesiastical learning, he applied himself diligently to the canons of the church, in which no one was more perfectly versed. Nor was he a stranger to the civil law, as appear from his works. In order that he might become more perfect in virtue, he withdrew into the deserts to the great St.

Anthony about the year 315, where he remained for some time. After his retreat where he had prepared himself for the ministry of the altar, he returned to the city, and having passed through the inferior degrees of ecclesiastical orders, was ordained deacon about the year 319. St. Alexander was so much taken with his prudence, virtue, and learning, that he desired to have him always with him, and governed his flock by his advice. He stood much in need of such a second, in defending his church against the calumnies and intrigues of the schismatics and heretics. In 325 St. Athanasius, accompanied his Bishop St. Alexander to the council of Nice, where he distinguished himself by the extraordinary zeal and learning with which he encountered not only Arius, but also Eusebius of Numidia, Theognius, and Maris, the principal protectors of that Heresiarch, and he had a great share in the disputationes and decisions of that venerable body. Five months after this great council, St. Alexander passed to his reward, soon after which, the bishops of all Egypt assembled at Alexandria, where they found the people and clergy unanimous in their choice of St. Athanasius for Patriarch, about the middle of the year 326, and the thirty year of his age. Immediately he ordained Trumentus, bishop of the Ethopians, and made the visitation of the churches under his jurisdiction.

tion throughout all Egypt. Notwithstanding the trials, calumnies, persecutions, and banishments, he remained fearless and undaunting. In those perilous times, when the Church suffered from the demons of hell, God raised up many holy pastors, whom he animated with his spirit, and strengthened in defense of his truth. Among these our Saint was the most illustrious champion. By his undaunted courage, and unparalleled greatness of soul under the most violent persecutions, he merited a crown equal to that of the most glorious martyrs. By his erudition, eloquence, and writings he holds an illustrious place among the principal doctors of the church, and by the example of his virtue, by which he rivalled the most renowned anchorites of the deserts, and the most holy confessors, he stemmed the torrent of scandal and iniquity which threatened to bear down all before it. After innumerable combats and as many great victories, this glorious saint, having governed the church of Alexandria forty-six years, was called to a life exempted from labor and suffering, on the 2nd of May, in the year 373. He ended his life in a holy old age, and went to keep company with his fathers, the patriarchs, apostles, and martyrs who had fought valiantly for the truth, as he had done. The humility, modesty, and charity of this great saint, his invincible meekness towards his enemies, who

were the most implacable and basest of men, and the heroic fortitude, patience, and zeal by which he triumphed over the persecution of almost the whole world confederated against him, and of four emperors, Constantine, Constantius, Julian, and Valens, three of whom employed wiles, stratagems, hypocrisy and sometimes open force to destroy him. These and all eminent virtues, have rendered his name venerable in the church to the latest ages which he ceases not to instruct and edify by his virtues. In a word he departed this life with far greater honor and glory than what he had received in his more than triumphant entries into Alexandria, when he returned from his banishment, so much was his death lamented by all good men, and the immortal glory of his name remains imprinted in their hearts.

#### ST. AURELIUS, ARCHBISHOP OF CARTHAGE.

St. Aurelius, Archbishop of Carthage, was born in the fourth century, of humble parentage he was educated in the fear and love of God. He was archdeacon of Carthage, when he was promoted to the Archeepiscopal dignity of that see, to which was annexed a jurisdiction little inferior to that of a patriarch over all the metropolitans of the different provinces of Africa, he cultivated a strict friendship with St. Augustine, he held several councils against

Donatus, and was the first that condemned Celestius the Pelagian in a council held in 412, and Palegius himself in another council in 416. He anathermatized this heresy before St. Augustine entered the list against it. St. Aurelius was called to his reward in 423. He is highly extolled by St. Fulgentius, and is honorable mentioned in the African Calendar of the fifth age.

ST. FULGENTIUS, BISHOP OF RUSPA OR  
ALFAQUES, AFRICA.

This great and holy man, Fabius Claudius Gordianus Fulgentius, was born in 468, some time after the Barbarians had dismembered Africa from the Roman empire. He was educated in sentiments of piety with his younger brother, under the care of his mother, Mariana, who was left a young widow. Being by her particular direction taught the Greek very young, he spoke it with as proper and exact an accent as if it had been his native language. He also applied himself to Latin, and all the useful parts of human literature, under masters distinguished for consummate abilities. Yet he knew how to mingle business with study, for he took upon himself the regulation of the family concerns, in order to ease his mother of the burden. His prudent circumspection in all the affairs he transacted, his virtuous conduct, his mild carriage

to all, and more especially his deference for his mother, without whose expressed orders or approbation he never did anything, caused him to be beloved and admired wherever his name was known. He was chosen procurator, that is lieutenant governor, and general receiver of the taxes of Byzacena. But it was not long before he grew disgusted with the world, and being justly alarmed at its dangers, he armed himself against them by pious reading, assiduous prayer, and rigorous fasting. His visits to monasteries were frequent, and happening among other books of spiritual entertainment to read a sermon of St. Augustine on the thirty-sixth psalm, in which that father treats of the world and the short duration of human life, he felt within him strong desires of embracing the monastic state. Fulgentius after prayer and careful consideration, presented himself for admittance at the monastery of Byzacena, but the Abbot immediately objected to the tenderness of his constitution, discouraged his desires, with words of some harshness, "Go" said he, "and first learn to live in the world abstracted from its pleasures. Who can well suppose, that you on a sudden, relinquishing a life of softness and ease, can take up with our coarse diet and clothing, and can inure yourself to our watchings and fastings?" The saint modestly replied: "He who hath inspired me with the will to serve him,

can also furnish me with courage and strength.' This humble, yet resolute answer, induced the abbot to admit him on trial. The saint was then in the twenty-second year of his age. The news of so unthought of an event both surprised and edified the whole country, many even imitated the example of the governor. But Mariana his mother in transports of grief, ran to the monastery, crying out at the gates, "Faustus restore to me my son, to the people their governor the church always protects widows, why then rob me, a desolate widow of my son?" This was certainly as great a trial of Fulgentius's resolution as it could well be put to, but the love of God, having the ascendant in his breast, gave him a complete victory over all the suggestions of nature, the abbot approved his vocation, and accordingly recommended him to the brethren. The saint having now obtained all he wished for in this world, made over his estate to his mother, to be discretionally disposed of by her in favor of his brother, as soon as he should be arrived at a proper age. Fulgentius became abbot and governed his monastery with great wisdom, until the year 499, the country being ravaged by an irruption of the Numidians, when he had to flee to Sicca Veneria, a city of the proconsul of Africa. He returned home in a short time after, and was received with incredible joy, he resumed the government of his monas-

tery, and many places at the same time sought him for their bishop. But the saint through his humility and love of retirement, concealed himself, though sought after eagerly by many citizens for their bishop. Thinking the danger over, he appeared again, but Ruspa now a little town called Alfaques, in the district of Tunis, still remained without a pastor, and by the consent of the Primate, Fulgentius was forcibly taken out of his cell, and consecrated bishop in 508. His new dignity made no alteration in his manner. He never wore other clothes than his usual coarse garb, which was the same in winter and summer. He went sometimes barefoot, he never undressed to take rest, and always rose to prayer before the midnight office. Fulgentius with sixty orthodox bishops, was banished to Sardinia, by the order of King Thrasimund, where he was thought the youngest of the venerable brethren, their sole oracle in all doubts, and their tongue and pen upon all occasions, and not only of them but even of the whole church of Africa. In this retirement the saint compounded many learned treatises for confirming and instructing the faithful in Africa. King Thrasimund, hearing that he was their principal support, and their invincible advocate, was desirous of seeing him, and having accordingly sent for him, appointed him lodgings in Carthage. The king then drew up a set of ob-

jections, to which he required his immediate answer, the saint without hesitation complied with and discharged the injunction, and this is no doubt his book, entitled “An Answer to Ten Objections”.

The King equally admired his humility and learning and the orthodox triumph exceedingly, in the advantage their cause gained by this piece. To prevent a second time the same effect, the King when he sent him new objections, ordered them to be only read to him. Fulgentius refused to give an answer in writing, unless he was allowed to take copy of them. He addressed, however, to the King an ample and modest confutation of Arianism, which we have under the title of his three books to King Thrasimund. The prince was pleased with the work, and granted him permission to reside at Carthage, till upon the repeated complaints from the Arian bishops of the success of his preaching, which threatened, they said, a total extinction of their sect in Carthage, he was sent back to Sardinia in 520. Being ready to go aboard the ship, he said to a Catholic, whom he saw weeping, “Grieve not, Juliatus! I shall shortly return, and we shall see the true faith of Christ flourish again in this Kingdom, with full liberty to profess it, but divulge not this secret to any.”

The event confirmed the truth of the prediction. His humility concealed the multi-

plicity of miracles which he wrought and he was wont to say. "A person may be endowed with the gift of miracles, and yet may lose his soul; miracles insure not salvation; they may procure esteem and applause, but what will it avail a man to be esteemed on earth, and afterwards be delivered up to hell torments?"

After the death of King Thrasimund in 523, the professors of the true faith called their pastors home, and they were received amid the flock with the greatest demonstrations of joy, particularly Fulgentius. The saint immediately set about the reformation of abuses that had crept in during the persecution, which had now continued for many years; yet this reformation was carried on with a sweetness that won, soon or late the hearts of the most vicious. His talents for preaching were singular, and Boniface, the Archbishop of Carthage, never heard him without watering, all the time the ground with his tears thanking God for having given so great a pastor to his Church. About a year before his death, he secretly retired from all business into a monastery to prepare himself for his passage to eternity, which he did with extraordinary fervor. In his agony, calling for his clergy and monks, who were all in tears, he begged pardon if he had ever offended any one of them. He comforted them, gave them some short, moving instructions, and calmly breathed forth his pious soul in

the year 538, and the 65th of his age. St. Fulgentius propose to himself St. Augustine as a model and as a true disciple, imitated him in his conduct, faithfully expounding its doctrine and imbibing his spirit.

#### ST. POSSIDIUS, BISHOP OF CALUMA IN NUMIDIA, AFRICA.

St. Possidius, was a native of Africa, and received his education in the famous school of Hippo, under the great St. Augustine, he also became a member of St. Augustine's order, at Hippo, where he remained until he became bishop of Caluma in Numidia, in 397, which diocese he found distracted by the factions of both heathens and Donastists. In 404, a party of the latter dragged him out of his house, beat him, and threatened his life. All the revenge he took of them was to obtain their pardon from the emperor. Four years after this, the idolaters, in a riotous festival on the 1st of June, had the insolence to dance around the church, throw stones into it, and set it on fire, wounding several of the clergy, and killing one upon the spot. Nectarius, a principal person among the heathens, who had no share in this tumult, wrote to St. Augustine, to beg to intercede with the emperor for the pardon of the rioters, observing to him that it is the duty of the Christian pastors to employ them-

selves in works of mercy and peace. By the interposition of Possidius their punishment was only an order which the emperor sent for the breaking down their idols, with a prohibition of their abominable festivals and sacrifices. When the relics of St. Stephen were brought into Africa, about the year 410, our holy bishop was careful to enrich Caluma with a portion of them, by which several miracles were there wrought, as St. Augustine informs us. St. Possidius established among the clergy of his Cathedral a monastic regularity, according to the rule of St. Augustine. The Vandals passed over from Spain into Africa, with an army of four score thousand veterans, long accustomed to blood and plunder made themselves in a short time masters of Manritana, Numidia, and the proconsular province, except the strong fortresses of Carthage, Cirta, and Hippo. They pillaged the whole country and towns which lay in their way, and among others Caluma, which seems to have never since lifted up its head. St. Possidius took refuge in Hippo, with his dear master, St. Augustine, who soon after died in his arms, in 430, during the siege of that city, which some time after fell into the hands of the barbarians. These were severe trials to our saint, who from that time lived in perpetual banishment from his flock. He wrote the life of St. Augustine, with a catalogue of his works. The

Italians claim, that from Africa he come into Italy, and died at Mirandola. The City Reginis Apulia honor him as a patron. The regular canons keep his festival on the 17th day of May, and honor him as one of the most illustrious fathers of their order.

ST. ALIPIUS, BISHOP OF TAGASTE,  
AFRICA.

“He that is weak in faith take unto you” are the words that led the subject of this short sketch, from darkness to light. St. Alipius was born at Tagaste, Africa. He studied grammar at Tagaste, and rhetoric at Carthage, both under St. Augustine; till a disagreement happened between St. Augustine and his father. Alipius still retained an extraordinary affection and respect for him, and was reciprocally much beloved by him on account of his great inclination to virtue. At Carthage, Alipius was unhappily bewitched with the vain shows of the circus, to which the inhabitants of that great city were extravagantly addicted. St. Augustine was much afflicted that so hopeful a young gentleman would be, or rather was already, lost in that dangerous school of passion; but he had no opportunity of admonishing him of that evil custom; Alipius all that time not being suffered by his father to be any longer one of his scholars. He happened how-

ever one day to step into his school, and heard some part of his lecture, and then departed as he did sometimes by stealth. Augustine, in expounding the subject which he had in hand, borrowed a similitude from the shows of the circus, with a smart derision of those who were captivated with the folly. This he did without any thought of Alipius. But, Alipius, thinking it had been spoken purely for him, and being a well disposed youth, was angry with himself for this weak passion, not with Augustine, whom he loved the more for this undesigned rebuke. Condemning himself, he rose out of the pit into which he was sunk, and went no more to the circus. Thus God, who sitteth at the helm and steereth the course of all things which he hath created, rescued from this danger one whom he had decreed to adopt one day among his children, and raise to the dignity of a bishop, and a dispenser of his sacraments. After this, Alipius prevailed with his father that he might be again Augustine's scholar. He was afterward involved with his mother in the superstition of the Manichees, being much taken with their boasted contingency, which he supposed to be true and sincere, whereas, says St. Augustine, it was only counterfeit to inveigle souls; for such are the charms, and such the dignity of virtue, that they who know not how to reach the height of that which is true, are easily deceived by su-

perficial appearance, and what had only the shadow of it. Alipius, whilst he was a student at Carthage, found a hatchet in the street, which a thief, who had attempted to cut off and steal some lead from certain rails in the city, had dropped to save himself, being closely pursued. Alipius innocently took up the hatchet, and, being found with it, was carried before the judge, where he was treated as the true thief. As the officers were leading him to prison or to punishment, he was met by an architect who had care of the public buildings, and knew Alipius, whom he had often seen at the house of a certain senator. This man, surprised to see him in such hands, inquired of him how so great a misfortune had befallen him, and having heard his case, he desired the people, who were in a great tumult and rage, to go along with him; for he would prove to them the innocence of their prisoner. He went to the house of a young man who was guilty of the fact, and met at the door an infant who innocently told the whole matter without suspecting any harm to his master. For being shown the hatchet, and asked whose it was, the child presently answered, it is ours; and being further examined, discovered the thief. Whereupon, the mob was confounded and Alipius discharged. This accident, according to the remark of Augustine, was an effect of divine providence, that he

might learn from it to be tender of the reputation of others, and guard against rash judgment, for generally, common fame is no grounds for condemning a man. Alipius pursuing his views in the world, went to Rome to study the law, where he lived chaste, behaved with great integrity and honor, and made assessor of justice in the court of the treasurer of Italy. In this charge he gave memorable proofs of justice and disinterestedness, and opposed an unjust usurpation of a powerful senator whose favor was courted by many and whose displeasure was dreaded by all. When a reward was promised Alipius scorned it; and when he was assaulted with threats, he despised them. The Judge himself, whose assessor he was, restrained by his integrity for if he had passed an unjust decree, Alipius would have gone off the bench. When St. Augustine came to Rome he stuck close to him, went with him to Milan, and was converted and baptized with him by St. Ambrose on Easter Eve in 387. Some time after they returned to Rome, and having spent there a year in retirement, went back to Africa. They lived together at Tagaste in a small community of devout persons for three years; Alipius made a journey to Palestine, where he saw, and constructed a friendship with St. Jerome. Upon his return into Africa, he was consecrated Bishop of Tagaste about the year 393. He was

Augustine's chief assistant in all he did, and wrote against the Donatus and Pelagians. He assisted at many councils, and undertook several journeys, and preached and labored with indefatigable zeal in the cause of God and his Church. He died about the year 429.

#### BISHOP ST. VICTOR.

St. Victor Bishop of Vite Africa was a native of Africa, and educated no doubt at Carthage; by his zeal defended the church from the heresy of his time; his zeal was too active for him to allow himself any rest whilst he saw souls perishing eternally in the ignorance of the true God; and the length of the journeys over rocks, precipices, and vast deserts was not able to discourage his heroic soul, which delighted in labors and dangers, and could think nothing difficult which was undertaken for so great an end. He banished, in many places, superstition, vice, and idolatry; and built schools and convents everywhere; he abhorred even the shadow of sin; was humble, charitable and compassionate, bearing the bowels of a father toward all; every man's distress drew tears in abundance from his eyes; and he comforted and encouraged all that groaned under the burden of any affliction. He departed this life, full of years, about the year 300.

A M. D. G.

NEGRO BISHOP OF SOUTH AMERICA.

Monsignor Sylverio Gomez Pimenta, one of the most illustrious men of his age, Bishop of Mariana, Brazil. He was born March 13th, 1830 in extreme poverty, being the son of slave parents who were filled with the fear and love of God; they did everything to bring their son up in the ways of the saints. From his childhood he practiced mortification and patience, he attended school half naked and barefooted, but became a perfect model for all; in fact so much so, he attracted the attention of the Archbishop of Bahia, who took a liking to this exceptionally brilliant youth, and after some time placed him in the seminary of his See city. Here Pimenta pursued his studies for the priesthood, winning admiration on all sides, not only for his intellectual powers, but for the kindness and nobility of his heart, every one was charmed with his charity. Ordained a priest he overcame the prejudices which existed against his race even in some Catholic countries, and was given ecclesiastical charges and offices of great importance, in which he bore himself so well and so creditably that, while quite young, he was raised to the episcopal dignity as Auxiliary Bishop to the Diocese of Bahia July 26th, 1890. In this office he still won favor, and when in 1896, the late

Pope Leo the Thirteenth restored the Diocese of Marianna, Amozon whose area was 300,000 square Kilometers and whose population two million, he designated as its first Prelate the Negro Bishop. This new office was by no means a sinecure. For years the Bishop's territory had been more or less neglected, and the state of religion was far from ideal. He was almost alone and without resources in his vast diocese; added to this, it had been the scenes of an anti-Catholic propaganda, which rendered the new Bishop's task particularly difficult. The zeal of this son of slave parents, was too active for him to allow himself any rest whilst he saw souls perishing eternally in the ignorance of Good and His Church, the length of the journeys over rocks, precipices, and vast deserts was not able to discourage his heroic soul, which delighted in labors and dangers, and would think nothing difficult which was taken for so great an end. He bent every effort in the building and maintaining of churches, schools, seminaries, and houses of charity. He gave little or no thought to his personal comfort, he went almost as poorly clad and with feet as destitute of covering as when he attended school years before at Bahia. He was humble, charitable and compassionate, bearing the bowels of a father toward all; he succeeded before his death in rehabilitating the diocese, which he had found

in ruins, and in elevating the tone of its religious and social life. His merit and influence was not confined to his diocese or Brazil, nor did his labor prevent him from continuing those studies in which he showed himself so brilliant at school. He was a man of vast learning, and had a great reputation among Orientalists for his knowledge of the Semitic languages. He was besides held as an authority of great weight in Biblical questions, and in Rome, that city of religious experts, his opinion was much esteemed. In the death of this great man not only the Negro race the world over has sustained a great loss, but the church one of her most gifted sons of the nineteenth century.



## CHAPTER VI.

### NEGRO SAINTS. ST. MONICA, MOTHER OF ST. AUGUSTINE.

The Church is doubly indebted, under God, to St. Monica, for the birth, and still more so for the conversion of the great St. Augustine, who was more beholden to St. Monica for his spiritual life by grace, than for his corporal life by his birth and education. She was born in 332, and as soon as marriagable, she married one Patricius, a native of Tagaste, a man of honor and probity, but an idolater. She obeyed and served him as her master, and labored to gain him to God, though the chief argument she used, wherein reclaiming him from his vices, was the sanctity of conduct, enforced by an obliging, affectionate behavior, by which she commanded his love, respect, and esteem. She had two sons and one daughter. Monica never thwarted her husband by the least action or word while she saw him in anger, but when the fit was over and he was calm, she mildly gave him her reasons, an account of her actions. When she saw other wives bearing the marks of their husband's anger on their disfigured faces, and heard them blaming their roughness of temper or debaucheries, she would answer them: "Lay the blame rather on yourselves and your tongues." Her example alone was a sufficient

proof, for, notwithstanding the passionate temper of her husband, it was never known that he ever struck her, or that they had ever for so much as one day, entertained any domestic dissension, because she bore all his sallies with patience and silence, made no other return but that of a greater obsequiousness, and waited an opportunity to make him sensible of his mistake when that was necessary. One of the happy fruits Monica reaped from her patience was her husband's conversion to Christ, who thereupon, became chaste; and faithful in all the duties of a good Christian, he died the year after he had been baptized. By mildness she also gained, both to her own interest and to Christ, her forward mother-in-law. She studied to imitate the actions of the saints, who were in possession of immortal bliss: and full of confidence in their intercession, she often visited the Tombs of the martyrs. Her exercises of piety did not hinder her attention in watching over the education of her children, in which God Almighty gave her occasion of merit and suffering, particularly in St. Augustine, that he might more amply crown her care in the end. As Augustine grew up, she endeavored continually to instill into him sentiments of piety; but fell into an unperceived passion and immoderate desire that he should excel in learning, though she flattered herself that she regarded this only as a means, whereof he

might one day make a good use to the honor of God. In his infancy, she had ranked him among the catechumens; and once in illness all things were prepared for his baptism, but it was deferred. Augustine, in his seventeenth year continued his studies at Carthage, where, in 373, he was seduced by the Manichees and drawn into that heresy. Monica being informed of his misfortune, grieved more bitterly for his spiritual death than worldly mothers do when they see their children carried to their graves; nor would she suffer him to live under the same roof with her, or to eat at the same table. "You have heard vœws," says St. Augustine, addressing himself to God, "and you have not despised her tears; for she, shed torrents in your presence in all places where she offered to you her prayers." His divine Majesty was pleased to give her an assurance that she was heard; so much comforted by it, that she again permitted him to eat and live with her. This happened about the year 377, almost nine years before his conversion in August 386. During all this time, the holy widow continued her prayers for his conversion, and her signs and tears, which nothing but his baptism at Milan could dry up. St. Augustine was twenty-nine years old when he determined to go to Rome, with view to teach rhetoric. Upon his arrival at Rome, he became dangerously sick; and he attributes his recovery to the prayers of his

mother, though she did not then know his situation: out of a favorable regard to whose petitions God would not cut him off in his impenitence. From Rome he went to teach rhetoric at Milan, in 384, and being convinced by St. Ambrose of the errors of his sect, renounced that heresy, yet without being fixed in the truth; continuing his search after it in a fluctuating state of mind. Monica followed him and in a great storm at sea comforted the sailors, assuring them from a vision that they would certainly reach the port. Finding him at Milan she learned from his own mouth that he was no longer a Manichee, but she redoubled her tears and prayer to God to obtain his thorough conversion. She respected St. Ambrose as the spiritual physician of his soul; and was herself wonderfully delighted with hearing his solid and beautiful discourses. She had the joy to see St. Augustine perfectly converted in August 386. She had contrived a good match for him, which might be a bar against any relapse into his former disorders, but understood from him, with great satisfaction, that he was resolved to embrace a state of perpetual constancy. When the vacation of the schools, during the vintage, came on St. Augustine retired with his friends to a country house. His mother accompanied them, and had a great share in their learned entertainments; in which she, by her natural genius and constant

conversation with God, showed an extraordinary penetration and judgment. St. Augustine was baptized at Easter Eve, in 387, with some of his friends, with whom he continued to live some time. St. Monica took as much care of them all as if they had been her children, and paid them all a deference as if each of them had been her father. They all set out together for Africa; but lost St. Monica on the road, who fell sick and died at Ostia, where they were to embark. Before her illness, conversing with her son St. Augustine, concerning eternal happiness, and the contempt of the world, she said to him, "Son there is nothing now in this life that affords me any delight. What have I to do here any longer, or why I am here, I know not: All my hopes in this world being now at an end. The only thing for which I desire to live for was that I might see you a Catholic and a child of heaven. God has done much more in that I see you now despising all earthly felicity, and entirely devoted to his service. What further business then have I here?" Another day, entertaining herself with her friends in the same place, she spoke so well on the happiness of death, as much surprised them, and being asked if she was not afraid to be buried in a place so far from her own country, she answered: "Nothing is far off from God. Neither do I need to fear that God will not find my body to raise it with the rest". Five days

after this she swooned away, and was for a little while insensible. Her two sons ran to her. When she came to herself, awaking as it were out of a profound sleep, she said to them: "Here you shall bury your mother." Augustine stood silent; Navigius wished that she might not die abroad, but in her own country: but she checking him with her eyes, said to them: "Lay this body anywhere, be not concern'd about that. The only thing I ask of you both is, that you make remembrance of me at the altar of the Lord where so ever you are." Her distemper growing stronger upon her, she suffered much; and on the ninth day of her illness, in the fifty-sixth year of her age, and of our Lord 387, that religious and pious soul was loosed from the body. St. Augustine, who was then thirty-three years of age closed her eyes; and though his grief was extreme, restrained his tears and those of his son Adeodatus, thinking the weeping did not become the funeral of her, who neither died miserably nor at all, as to her principal and better part. The corpse was carried to the church, and when it was set down by the grave, according to the custom of the place, the sacrifice of our ransom was offered for her. Her body was translated from Ostia to Rome in 1430 under Pope Martine; and remains there in the church of St. Augustine.

## ST. BENEDICT DE PHILADELPHO SPAIN.

St. Benedict de Philadelpho or moor of Spain; was born of slave parents; both of whom were very pious and virtuous; consequently content and happy in their station of life. By an agreement entered into, between his parents and master, that their first born should be free; our saint was made free at his birth; and his good parents; presented him in thanksgiving, to the Blessed Virgin. They were not able to give their son an education, nor did they on that account repine, but redoubled their diligence in instructing him early in the rudiments of Christian doctrine, and all the maxims of our holy religion, often repeating to him the lesson, which Tobias gave his son: "We shall be rich enough if we fear God." Their own example was a most powerful, and constant instruction, and inspired him more strongly than words could do, with the Christian spirit of humility, meekness, piety, and the fear of God, animated by charity, which is fruitful in all manner of good works. Benedict was from his infancy serious obedient, mild, patient, and docile, an enemy to the least sloth. He conceived the highest sense of all religious duties, and was inured, both his parents care, and by his own fervor, to the practice of them. The meanness of his condition much delighted him, as soon as he was of an

age to know its value. The painful labor, hardships, inconveniences and humiliations to which his condition exposed him, he looked upon as most precious advantages; being sensible that the poverty which our Redeemer chose was not such a one as even worldlings would desire, abounding with all the necessaries and comforts of life, but a poverty which is accompanied with continued privations, sufferings, and denials of the gratifications of the senses. The great curse which Christ denounces against the riches, regards the inordinate pleasure that is sought in the abundance of earthly goods, and in the delights of sense. St. Augustine says, that God ranks among the reprobate, not only those who shall have received their comfort on earth, but also those who shall have grieved to be deprived of it. This was the misfortune which Benedict dreaded. In order to preserve himself from it, he joined the Hermits of the deserts, where he never ceased to beg of God, the grace to love the happy state of poverty in which divine providence had placed him, and to bear all its hardships with joy and perfect resignation, in a spirit of penance, without which all the tribulations of this world are of no advantage for heaven. He divided his morsel with the poor, and often fed them, whilst he fasted. At his labor he was faithful and diligent and a spirit of prayer sanctified all his actions. Such was the life of this youth-

ful hermit of the desert; at the age of 14 by an order of the holy Father the Pope, commanding all hermits of the desert, and other religions not living in regular community, to join one or the other of the approved orders of the church: our saint presented himself to be received amongst the Franciscans, where after having finished his novitiate with great fevor, he made his vows, and was received as a lay-brother. Though employed in the meanest offices of the house, he performed them with the most perfect fidelity. He redoubled his fasts and austerities; he prayed continually, and slept very little during the night. His humility, his sweetness, his love of mortification, gained him the veneration of all the brethren. He chastised his body by rigorous fasts, and endeavored, by constant compunction and the severity of his penance, to prevent the anger of his Judge at the last day. Had it been reasonable to form a judgment of the enormity of his sins by the humble opinion he entertained of himself, and by the tears he shed he would have passed for the most grievous sinner upon the face of the earth; where as the sins he so grievously bewailed were only the highest faults of inadvertence, such as the just fell into and which only his great purity of heart could have discerned, and which it magnified in his eyes. To wipe away these daily stains, through the merits of Christ's

passion applied to his soul) he lived in constant compunction, learning every day to become more watchful of himself in all his words and actions, and in all the motions of his heart. His patience made him bear in silence and joy the severest rebukes for faults which he had not committed: and his obedience was such that he executed without delay the most difficult duties enjoined him. He chose a retired cell that was dark and incommodius. He would often go to pray in most unfrequented oratories, that he might give himself up more freely to contemplation. He divested himself of everything that was allowed him by his rule, and when he saw himself thus nake, he cried out, prostrate before his Crucifix: “Behold me, O Lord, bereft of all earthly things: be thou I beseech thee, my only good: I look upon every other thing as a real danger and as a loss to my soul.” He suffered many interior trials which tormented him exceedingly; but to these storms a profound calm succeeded. The reports of his frequent raptures, and many miracles, caused the people to flock to his convent. At one time while he was cook, the oil gave out; by his confidence in God, he prayed over the empty barrels, and they were immediately filled; while in the same position, he fell into an ecstasy while in the church praying; so in rapt, that he forgot that it was time for dinner, the fire was out and nothing was

prepared; it was near the hour of twelve o'clock, when he came out of his ecstasy, and went in the kitchen, accompanied by a number of angels, who aided him in preparing the meal, though the hour of twelve, was near, nevertheless dinner was served on time, to the amazement of all the brethren, and a bishop who had come to consult with him on spiritual affairs. These and many other wonders were attested to by many eye witnesses in the process of his canonization. Though uneducated, he filled the highest places in the order; from cook, novice master, and guardian to General. He explained the most profound mysteries of our faith, with the greatest clearness; and this sublime knowledge he owed to his intimate communication with God in prayer. His prudence which was remarkable in the conduct of souls drew to him a great concourse of people, bishops, cardinals and princes. His miracles were not less remarkable than the other extraordinary favors he received from God. Many sick owed their recovery to his prayers. On the day of his death he received the Holy Viaticum, and after it, Extreme Unction. Who knows the many aspirations that went forth from that heart so inflamed with the love of God: Oh that my soul was freed from the shackles of my body, to be reunited to Jesus Christ. Praise and thanksgiving be to God. The will of God be done. Jesus crucified, re-

ceive my heart, kindle in it, the fire of your holy love." With such sentiments, he passed to his eternal reward in the ninety-eight year of his age and the eighty-third of his religious life. His feast is celebrated on the third of April. "He hath deposed the mighty from their seat, and hath exalt the humble."

BLESSED MARTIN OF PERU, SOUTH  
AMERICA:

A writer has said that it is not improbable that America was known to the ancient Carthaginians, be that true or not, there is one thing certain, that the Christian religion, in its most perfect state was found in one of her offspring, who today is venerated, as the second, to be called Blessed in God's Church, on American soil The Blessed Martin of Peru, South America — was born of slave parents, who were filled with the fear and love of God. Though their condition was filled with many hardships, nevertheless they did everything to bring their beloved son up in the way he should walk, that in after life, he would not depart therefrom. From his infancy his patience, in suffering, and his love of mortification, were extraordinary. After his freedom which was given him in his early years, he became a perfect model for all who came in contact with him; his lovable disposition, his sweetness, and his humility gain the esteem of the entire com-

munity in which he lived. He studied to remove every obstacle that would hinder the perfect reign of divine love in his soul; true charity animated his soul, it regulated and sanctified all his actions. By it he ardently endeavored to glorify God alone in all his works, sincerely offering and referring himself, and all he did to that end. That he might become more penitential, more humble, and acceptable to God, he enrolled himself in the order of St. Dominie. His insatiable zeal for the salvation of others, drew him often to the public places in the city, to seek opportunities of gaining some soul to God, or at least prevent some sin. He often visited the hospitals, there to comfort, exhort, and serve the sick. He was most zealous in suggesting to them devout acts of virtue, and to procure them every spiritual aid; he watched day and night about the sick, especially those that were dying, with the most scrupulous attention. Fervent humble prayer was the assiduous exercise of his soul. Everyone was charmed with his charity, even, as it is related by eyewitnesses for his beatification, the beast of the forest loved and obeyed him; like another St. Philip Neri, his thirst for the salvation of souls, made him earnestly desire to go to the Indies, and the far East; so much so that God, according to briefs for his process of beatification, gave him the power of being both in the far East, and at home, at

one and the same time. He was dissuaded by those whom he consulted, who bade him remain at Peru, as the field was amply large enough for his zeal and labor. God favored the fervor of his charity with many extraordinary graces. After having served his Master with fidelity, he happily passed to his reward about the year 1630.



## CHAPTER VII.

### NEGRO OR AFRICAN FATHERS OF DESERTS. ST. ANTHONY.

St. Anthony, father of the cenibitical life, was born at Coma, a village near Heraclea, in Upper Egypt, in 251. His parents, who were Christians and rich, to prevent his being tainted by bad example and vicious conversation, kept him always at home, so that he grew up unacquainted with any branch of human literature, and would read no language but his own. He was noted for his temperate habits, a faithfullness to church duties, and always obedient to his parents. By their death he found himself possessed of a vast estate, and the care of a sister ,ere he was twenty years of age. Six months later, on hearing the words of Christ to the rich young man read in the church: Go sell what thou hast, and give it to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven. (Matt. xiv--21.) Words which he considered addressed to himself; going home, he made over to the poor about one hundred and twenty acres of good land, that he and his sister might be free from all public taxes and burdens. Soon after hearing in the church these words of Christ: "Be not solicitous for tomorrow". (Matt. vi--34.) He also distributed in alms the movables which he had re-

served, and placed his sister in a house of virgins, which most moderns take to be the first instance mentioned in history of a nunnery. She was afterwards intrusted with the care and direction of others in that holy state of life. Anthony himself retired into a solitude, near his village, in imitation of a certain old man, who led the life of a hermit in the neighborhood of Coma. Manual labor, prayer, and pious reading were his whole occupation and such was his fervor that if he heard of any virtuous recluse, he sought him out, and endeavored to make the best advantage of his example and instructions. He saw nothing practiced by any other in the service of God, which he did not imitate, thus he soon became a perfect model of humility, Christian condescension, charity, prayer, and all virtues. He was severely assailed by the tempter; first, he represented to him divers good works he might have been able to do with his estate in the world, and the difficulties of his present condition. A common artifice of the enemy, whereby he strives to make a soul slothful or dissatisfied in her vocation, in which God expects to be glorified by her. Being discovered and repulsed by the young novice, he varied his method of attack, and annoyed him night and day with filthy thoughts and obscene imaginations. Anthony opposed to his assaults the strictest watchfulness over his senses, austere

fasts, humility, and prayer, till Satan appearing in a visible form first of a woman coming to seduce him then of a black boy to terrify him, at length confess himself vanquished. The saints food was only bread, with a little salt, and he drank nothing but water, he never ate before sunset, and sometimes only once in two or four days, he laid on a rush mat, or on the bare floor. In quest of a more remote solitude he withdrew further from Coma and hid himself in an old sepulcher, whither a friend brought him from time to time a little bread. Satan was here again, permitted to assault him in a visible manner, to terrify him with dismal noises, and once he so grievously beat him, that he lay almost dead, covered with bruises and wounds, and in this condition he was one day found by his friend, who visited him from time to time to supply him with bread, during all the time he lived in the ruinous sepulcher. When he began to come to himself, though not yet able to stand, he cried out to the devils, while he yet lay on the floor: "Behold, here I am do all you are able against me. Nothing shall ever separate me from Christ, my Lord." Here upon the fiends appearing again, renewed the attack, and alarmed him with terrible clamors, and a variety of specters, in hideous shapes of the most frightful wild beasts, which they assumed to dismay and terrify him; till a ray of heavenly light

breaking in upon him, chased them away, and caused him to cry out: "Where wast thou, my Lord and Master? Why wast thou not here, from the beginning of my conflict, to assuage my pains?" A voice answered: Anthony I was here the whole time; I stood by thee, and beheld thy combat, and because thou hast manfully withstood thine enemies, I will always protect thee, and will render thy name famous through the earth. "At these words the saint arose much cheered, and strengthened, to pray and return thanks to his deliverer. St. Anthony had led this manner of life near Coma, till resolving to withdraw into the deserts about the year 255, the thirty-fifth of his age, he crossed the eastern branch of the Nile, and took up his abode in the ruins of an old castle on top of the mountains, in which close solitude he lived almost twenty years very rarely seeing any man, except one who brought him bread every six months. That he might satisfy the importunities of others, about the year 305, the fifty-fifth of his age, he came down from the mountain, and founded his first monastery at Phaium, near the confines of Upper and Middle Egypt. He exhorted his brethren to allot the least time they possible could to the care of the body. Notwithstanding which, he was very careful never to place perfection in mortification, as related by Cassian, but in charity, in which was his whole study.

continually to improve his soul. He wore a white coat of sheepskin, with a girdle, over a garment of sackcloth. He instructed his monks to have eternity always present to their minds, and to reflect every morning that perhaps they might not live till night, and every evening that perhaps they might never see the morning, and to perform every action as if it were the last of their lives, with all the fervor of their souls to please God. He often exhorted them to watch against temptations, and to resist the devil with vigor and spoke admirably of his weakness, saying: "He dreads fasting, prayer, humility, and good works; he is not able even to stop my mouth who speak against him. The illusions of the devil soon vanish, especially if a man arms himself with the sign of the Cross. The devils tremble at the sign of the Cross of our Lord, by which he triumphed over and disarmed them. He told them in what manner the fiend in his rage has assaulted him by visible phantoms, but these disappeared while he persevered in prayer. He told them that once the devil appeared to him in glory and said: "Ask what you please, I am the power of God," he invoked the holy name of Jesus, and he vanished. The persecution being renewed in 311; St. Anthony hoping to receive the Crown of Martyrdom, went to Alexandria, served and encouraged the martyrs in the mines and dungeons, before the tribunals, and

at the places of execution. In 312 the persecution being abated, returned to his monastery, and innured himself in his cell. Some time after he built another monastery, called Rispin, near the Nile, but he chose, for the most part, to shut himself up in a remote cell upon a mountain of difficult access, with Macarius, a disciple, who entertained strangers. Once St. Anthony saw in a vision the whole earth covered so thick with snares, that it seemed scarcely possible to set down a foot without falling into them. At this sight he cried out, trembling: who, O Lord, can escape them all?" A voice answered him: "Humility, O Anthony! St. Anthony always considered himself the least of his brethren and the very outcast of mankind; he was attentive to the advice of every one, and is said to have received benefit from the meanest person. It is related that he once fell into dejection, finding uninterrupted contemplation above his strength; but was taught to apply himself at intervals to manual labor, by a vision of an angel who appeared plaiting mats of palm tree leaves, then rising to pray, and after some time setting down again to work; and who at length said to him. "Do this and thou shalt be saved." St. Anthony, in the year 339, saw in a vision, and the figure of mules kicking down the altar the havoc which the Arian persecution made two years after in Alexandria, and

clearly foretold it, as we are assured by S. S. Athanasius, Jerom and Chrysostom. He would not speak to a heretic, unless to exhort him to the true faith; and drove all such from his mountain, calling them venomous serpents. At the request of the bishops, about the year 355, he took a journey to Alexandria, to confound the Arians, preaching aloud in that city, that God the Son is not a creature, but of the same substance with the Father. All the people ran to see him, and rejoiced to hear him; even the pagans, struck with the dignity of his character, flocked to him, saying: "We desire the man of God". He converted many and wrought several miracles. St. Athanasius conducted him back as far as the gates of the city, where he cured a girl possessed by the devil. Being desired by the general of Egypt to make a longer stay in the city than he had proposed, he answered: "As fish die if they leave the water, so does a monk if he forsakes his solitude." Heathen Philosophers, and others often went to dispute with him, and always returned much astonished at his humility, meekness, sanctity, and extraordinary wisdom. When certain Philosophers asked him how he could spend his time in solitude, without the pleasure of reading books, he replied, that nature was his great book, and amply supplied the want of others. When others, despising him as an illiterate man, came with the design to

ridicule his ignorance, he asked them with great simplicity which was first, reason or learning, and which produced the other? The Philosophers answered: "Reason, or good sence". "This, then, said St. Anthony, suffices". The Philosophers went away astonished at the wisdom and dignity with which he prevented their objections. Some others demanding a reason of his faith in Christ, on purpose to insult it, he put them to silence by showing that they degraded the notion of the divinity, by ascribing to it infamous human passions, but that the humiliation of the Cross is the greatest demonstration of infinite goodness, and its ignominy appears the highest glory by the triumphant resurrection, the miraculous raising of the dead, and curing of the blind and sick. He then admirably proved, that faith in God and his works is more clear and satisfactory than the sophistry of the Greeks. He dispute the Greeks through an interpreter. No one ever visited St. Anthony under any affliction and sadness, who did not return home full of comfort and joy, many miraculous cures were wrought by him, and he was also favored with several heavenly visions and revelations. Belacius, general of Egypt, persecuting the Catholics with extreme fury, St. Anthony, by a letter, exhorted him to leave the servants of Christ in peace. Belacius tore the letter then spit and trampled upon it, and

threatened to make the Abbot the next victim of his fury; but five days after as he was riding with Nestorius, governor of Egypt, their horses began to play and prance, and the governor's horse, though otherwise tame, by jostling, threw Belacius from his horse, and by biting his thigh, tore it in such a manner that the general died miserably on the third day. His example and instructions have been the most perfect rule for the monastic life to all succeeding ages. St. Anthony, hearing his disciples express their surprise at the great multitudes who embraced a monastic life, and applied themselves with incredible ardor to the most austere practices of virtue, told them with tears, that the time would come when monks would be fond of living in cities and stately buildings, and of eating at dainty tables, and be only distinguished from persons of the world by their habit; but that still, some among them would arise to the spirit of true perfection, whose crown would be so much the greater; as their virtue would be more difficult, amid the contagion of bad example. He extols the efficacy of the sign of the Cross in chasing the evil one, and dissipating his illusions, and lays down rules for the discernment of spirits, the first of which is, that the devil causes in the soul impressions of fear, sadness, confusion, and disturbance. St. Anthony performed the visitation of his monks, which num-

bered upward, 100,000, a little before his death, which he foretold them with his last instructions, but no tears could move him to die among them. He hastened back to that solitude, and some time after fell sick: he repeated to, two of his disciples, his orders for the burning of his body secretly in that place adding, "In the day of the resurrection, I shall receive it incorruptible from the hands of Christ." He added, "Farewell, my children, Anthony is departing, and will be no longer with you." At these words they embraced him, and he stretching out his feet, without any other sign calmly ceased to breathe. His death happened in the year 356, probably on the 17th of January, on which the most ancient Martyrologies name him. He was one hundred and five years old. A most sublime gift of heavenly contemplation and prayer, was the fruit of this great saint's holy retirement.

#### ST. MACARIUS, THE ELDER OF UPPER EGYPT.

St. Macarius, the Elder was born in upper Egypt, about the year 300, and brought up in the country in tending cattle. In his childhood, in company with some others, he once stole a few figs, and ate them, but from the time of his conversion to his death, he never

cease to weep bitterly for this sin. By a powerful call of divine grace, he retired from the world in his youth, and dwelling in a little cell in a village, made mats, in continual prayer and great austeries. A wicked woman falsely accused him of having deflowered her; for which supposed crime he was dragged through the streets, beaten, and insulted, as a base hypocrite, under the garbe of a monk he suffered all with patience, and sent the woman what he earned by his work, saying to himself: "Well Macarius! having now another to provide for, thou must work the harder." But God discovered his innocence; for the woman falling in labor, lay in extreme anguish, and could not be delivered till she had named the true father of her child. The people converted their rage into the greatest admiration of the humility and patience of the saint. To shun the esteem of men, he fled into the vast hideous desert of Scete; being then about thirty years of age. In this solitude he lived sixty years, and became the spiritual parent of innumerable holy persons, who put themselves under his direction, and were governed by the rules he prescribed them; but all dwelt in separate hermitages. St. Macarius admitted only one desciple with him, to entertain strangers. He was compelled by an Egypt bishop to receive the order of priesthood, about the year 340, the fortieth of his age, that he might celebrate

the divine mysteries for the convenience of the holy colony. When the deserts became better peopled, there were four churches built in it, which were served by so many priests. The austerities of St. Macarius were excessive, he usually ate but once a week; for twenty years, he never once ate, drunk, or slept, as much as nature required. His body was weak and parched up. He delivered his instructions in few words, and principally inculcated silence, humility, mortification, retirement, and continual prayer, especially the last, to all sorts of people. He used to say, "In prayer, you need not use many lofty words. You can often repeat with a sincere heart, Lord, show me mercy as thou knowest best or, assist me O Lord! He was much delighted with the ejaculation of perfect resignation and love. "O Lord have mercy on me, as thou pleasest, and knowest best in thy goodness!" His mildness and patience were invincible, and occasioned the conversion of a heathen priest, and many others. The devil told the saint one day, "I can surpass thee in watching, fasting, and many other things; but humility conquers and disarms me." A young man applying to St. Macarius for spiritual advice, he directed him to go to a burying ground, and upbraid the dead; and after to go and flatter them. When he came back, the saint asked him what answer the dead had made. "None at all." Said

the other, “either to reproach or praise.” Then, replied Macarius, “go and learn neither to be moved with injuries nor flatterers. If you die to the world and to yourself you will begin to live to Chirst.” A subtle heretic of the sect of the Hieracites, called so from Hierax, who in the reign of Dioclesian denied the resurrection of the dead, had by his sophisms, caused some to stagger in their faith. St. Macarius to confirm them in the truth, raised a dead man to life; that is he bade a dead man to speak, after which he bade him rest till the resurrection. Our saint, knowing that the end drew near, made a visit to the monks of Nitria, and exhorted them to compunction and tears so pathetically, that they all fell weeping at his feet. “Let us weep, brethren,” said he, “and let our eyes pour forth floods of tears before we go hence, lest we fall into that place where tears will only increase the flames in which we shall burn.”

He went to receive the reward of his labors in the years 390, and of his age the ninetieth, having spent sixty years in the desert of Scete.

#### ST. PAUL, OF LOWER THEBAIS.

St. Paul, the first hermit was a native of the lower Thebais, in Egypt, he died in the year our Lord 342, the one hundred and thirteenth of his age, and ninetieth of solitude, he

is usually called the first hermit to distinguish him from others of that name.

ST. PACHOMIUS, ABBOT.

St. Pachomius was born about the year 292 in upper Thebais, he became Abbot in 325 and died 348.

ST. PRIOR OF EGYPT.

St. Prior hermit was a native of Egypt and one of the first disciples of St. Anthony, and died toward the fourth century in the one hundredth year of his age.

ST. SIMEON, SURNAMED SALUS.

St. Simeon, surnamed Salus, was born in Egypt about the year 522 forsaking the world at an early age, gave himself up to a life of contemplation, whole nights seemed to him short in those exercises, and when the rising sun in the morning seemed to him too soon to call him from his knees to manual labor, or other employment, he would lament that the incomparable sweetness which he enjoyed, in the more perfect freedom with which his heart was taken up in heavenly contemplation in silent watching of the night, should be interrupted or abated. But the foundation of his most ardent charity, and that sublime contemplation by which his soul soared in noble and lofty flights above all earthly things, was laid in purity and

disengagement of his affection, the contempt of the world, a most profound humility, the universal mortification of his senses and of the powers of his soul. Hence flowed that constant tranquility and serenity of his mind, which was the best proof of a perfect mastery of his passions. After sixty years of the contemplative life, St. Simeon passed the reward of the Justed in the year of our Lord 588.

#### ST. SISOES.

St. Sisoes was one of the most shining lights of the Egyptian deserts. He was an African by birth. Having quitted the world from his youth, he retired to the desert of Seete and lived some time under the direction of Abbot Hor. The desire of finding a retreat yet more unfrequented induced him to cross the Nile and hide himself in the mountains where St. Anthony died some time before. The memory of that great man's virtue being still fresh, wonderfully supported his fervor. He imagined he saw him, and heard the instructions, he was wont to deliver to his disciples and he strained every nerve to imitate his most heroic exercises, the austerity of his penance, the rigor of silence, the almost unremitting ardor of his prayer, in so much that the reputation of his sanctity became so illustrious as to merit the full confidence of all the neighboring solitaries. He frequently passed days without eating, be-

ing so wrapped in God that he forgot his food entirely. At times his heart being so inflamed with divine love, that he was scarcely able to support its violence, he only obtained relief from his sighs, which frequently escaped without his knowledge, and even against his will. His ordinary work was making mats and baskets. His zeal against vice was without bitterness; and when his monks fell into faults, far from effecting astonishment or the language of reproach; he helps them to rise again with a tenderness truly paternal: When he once recommended patience and the exact observance of rules, he told the following anecdote: Twelve monks, benighted on the road, observed that their guide was going astray. This, for fear of breaking their rule of silence, they forbore to notice, thinking within themselves that at daybreak he would see his mistake and put them in the right road. Accordingly, the guide discovered his error with much confusion, was making apologies, when the monks being now at liberty to speak, only saw with the greatest good humor; Friend, we saw very well that you went out of your road; but we were then bound to silence. The man was struck with astonishment, and very much edified at this answer, expressive of such patience and strictness of observance.” St. Sisoës was singularly devoted to humility; and in all his advices and instructions to others, held constantly before

their eyes this most necessary virtue. A recluse saying to him one day, "Father, I always place myself in the presence of God," "he replied: "It would be much more to your advantage to place yourself below every creature, in order to be securely humble." Thus, while he never lost sight of the divine presence, it was ever accompanied with the consciousness of his own nothingness and misery. His extraordinary mortifications appeared so trifling in his mind, that he called himself a sensual man, and would have every one else to be of the same opinion. He was always ready to blame himself, and saw nothing praise worthy in others which did not serve him for an occasion to censure his own lukewarmness. On a visit of three solitaries wanting instructions, one of them said, "Father, what shall I do to shun hell-fire? He made no reply, "and for my part, "added another, "how shall I escape the gnashing of teeth, and the worm that never dies?" "What also will become of me, concluded the third, for every time I think on utter darkness I am ready to die with fear?" Then the saint breaking silence, answered, I confess that these are subjects which never employ my thoughts, and as I know that God is merciful, I trust he will have compassion on me. You are happy he added, and I envy your virtue. You speak of the torments of hell, and your fears on this account must be powerful guards

against the admission of sin. Alas! then it is I should exclaim: What shall become of me? I, who am so insensible as never even to reflect on the place of torments destined to punish the wicked after death. Undoubtedly this is the reason I am guilty of so much sin. The solitaries retired very much edified with this humble reply. The saint said one time, "I am now thirty years praying daily that my Lord Jesus may preserve me from saying an ill word, and yet I am always relapsing." The servant of God, worn out with sickness and old age, yielded at last to his disciple. Abraham's advice, and went to reside a while at Clyisma, a town on the border, or at least in the neighborhood of the Red Sea. But he was not at ease till he returned to his retreat, where he finished his holy course. The solitaries of the desert assiting at his agony, heard him as Rufinus relates, Cry out, Behold, Abbot Anthony, the choir of prophets and angels come to take my soul." At the same time his countenance shone, and being sometimes interiorly recollect with God, he cried out anew, "Behold! our Lord comes for me." At the instance he expired, his cell was perfumed with a heavenly odor. He died about the year 429, after a retreat of at least sixty-two years in St. Anthony's mount.

ST. PACHONEIUS, UPPER THEBIAS.

Though St. Anthony be justly the institutor of the cenobitic life, or that of religious persons living in community under a certain rule. St. Pachoneius was the first who drew up a monastic rule in writing. He was born in upper Thebias the year 292, of idolatrous parents and was educated in their blind superstition, and in the study of the Egyptian sciences. From his infancy, he was meek and modest, and had an aversion to the profane ceremonies used by the infidels in the worship of their idols. Being about twenty years of age he was pressed into the emperors troops, probably the tyrant Maximus, who was master of Egypt from the year 310 and in 312 made great levies to carry on a war against Licinius and Constantine. He was with several of the recruits, put on board a vessel that was sailing down the river. They arrived in the evening at Thebias, or Diospolis, the capital of Thebias, a city in which dwelt many Christians. These true disciples of Christ sought every opportunity of relieving and comforting all that were in distress, and were moved with compassion towards the recruits, who were kept close confined and very ill treated. The Christians of this city showed them the tenderness as if they had been their own children; took all possible care of them, and supplied

them liberally with money and necessaries. Such an uncommon example of disinterested virtue made a great impression on the mind of Pachoneius. He inquired who their pious benefactors were and when he heard that they believed in Jesus Christ the only Son of God, and that in hope of a reward in the world to come, they labored continually to do good to all mankind, he found kindled in his heart a great love of so holy a law, and ardent desire of serving the God whom these good men adored. The next day when he was continuing his journey down the river, the remembrance of this purpose strengthened him to resist a carnal temptation. From his infancy he had been always a lover of chastity and temperance; but the example of the christians had made those virtues appear to him far more amiable, and in a new light. After the overthrow of Maximus, his forces were disbanded. Pachoneius was no sooner returned home, but he repaired to a town in Thebais, in which there was a christian church, and there he entered his name among the catechumen, or such as were preparing for baptism, and having through the usual course of preliminary instructions and practices with great attention and fervor, he received that sacrament at Chenoboscium, with great sentiments of piety and devotion. When Pachoneius was baptized, he began seriously to consider with himself how he should most

faithfully fulfill the obligation which he contracted, and attain to the great end to which he aspired. Hearing that a venerable old man named Palemon, served God in the desert in great perfection, he sought him out, and with great earnestness begged to live under his direction. The hermit having set before him the difficulties and austeries of his way of life, which several had already attempted in vain to follow, advised him to make a trial of his strength and fervor in some monastery; and to give him a sketch of the difficulties he had to encounter in the life, he aspired to, he added: "Consider, my son, that my diet is only bread and salt. I drink no wine, use no oil, watch one half of the night, spending that time in singing palms or in meditation on the holy scriptures and sometimes pass the whole night without sleeping." Pachoneius was amazed at this account, but not discouraged. He thought himself able to undertake every thing that might be a means to render his soul pleasing to God, and readily promised to observe whatever Palemon should think fit to enjoin him, who there upon admitted him into his cell, and gave him the monastic habit. Pachoneius was by his example enabled to bear solitude, and an acquaintance with himself. He was in the beginning often drowsy at the night office. Palemon used to rouse him, and say: Labor and watch, my dear Pachoneius, least the enemy

overthrow you and ruin all your endeavors." Whatever instructions he read or heard, he immediately endeavored fervently to reduce to practice. Pachoneius used sometimes to go into a vast uninhabited desert on the banks of the Nile, called Tabenna, in the diocese of Teutyra, a city between the great and little Diospolis. While he was there one day in prayer, he heard a voice which commanded him to build a monastery in that place, in which he should receive those who should be sent by God to serve him faithfully. He received about the same time from an angel who appeared to him, certain instructions relating to a monastic life. Pachoneius going back to Palemon, imparted to him this vision, and both of them coming to Tabenna, built there a little cell towards the years 325 about twenty years after St. Anthony had founded his first monastery. After a short time, Palemon returned to his former dwelling, having promised his disciple a yearly visit, but he died soon after. Pachoneius received first his oldest brother John, and after his death many others, so that enlarged his house; and the number of his monks in a short time amounted to a hundred. Their clothing was of the roughest linen, that of Pachoneius often made of hair cloth. He passed fifteen years without ever laying down, taking his short rest sitting on a stone. By his rule, the fasts and tasks of work were proportion to every

one's strength; though all ate together in one common refectory, in silence, with their cowls or hoods drawn over their heads, that they might not see one another at meals. Their habit was a tunic of white linen without sleeves, with a cowl of the same stuff; they wore on their shoulders a white goatskin, called a Melotes. All his monks were occupied in various kinds of manual labor; no moment was allowed for idleness. Silence was so strictly observed at Tabenna, that a monk, who wanted anything necessary, was only to ask for it by signs. He received the sickly and weak, rejecting none for the want of corporal strength, being desirous to conduct to heaven all souls which had fervor to walk in the paths of perfection. He built six other monasteries in Thebais, not far asunder, and from the year 336, chose often to reside in that of Paban, or Pan, near Thebes, in its territory, though not far from Tabenna, situation in the neighborhood or the province of Diospolis, also in Thebais. Paban became more famous and numerous a monastery than that of Tabenna itself. He converted many infidels, and zealously opposed the Arians, but could not be induced by his bishop to receive the Holy order of priesthood. In 333, he was favored with a visit of St. Athanasius at Tabenna. His sister, at a certain time came to his monastery desiring to see him; but he sent her word at the gate, that no

woman could be allowed to enter his enclosure, and that she ought to be satisfied with hearing that he was alive. However, it being her desire to embrace a religious state, he built her a nunnery on the other side of the Nile, which was soon filled with holy virgins. St. Pachoneius going one day to Pane, one of his monasteries, met the funeral procession of a tepid monk deceased. Knowing the wretched state in which he died, and strike a terror into the slothful, he forbade his monks to proceed in singing psalms, and order the clothes which covered the corpse to be burnt, saying: "Honors could only increase his torments; but the ignominy with which his body was treated, might move God to show more mercy to his soul; for God forgives some sins not only in this world, but also in the next." When the procurator of the house had sold the mats at market at a higher price than the saint had bid him, he ordered him to carry back the money to the buyers, and chastised him for his avarice. Among many miracles wrought by him, the author of his life assures us that though he had never learned the Greek or Latin languages, he sometimes miraculously spoke them; he cured the sick and persons possessed by the devils, with blessed oil. He often told the sick or distressed persons, their sickness or affliction was an effect of the divine goodness in their behalf;

and he only prayed for their temporal comfort, with this clause or condition if it should not prove hurtful to their souls. One day a certain monk having doubled his diligence at work, and made two mats instead of one, set them where St. Pachoneius might see them. The saint perceiving the snare, said, "This brother hath taken a great deal of pains from morning till night, to give his work to the devil." And to cure his vanity by humiliations he enjoined him, by the way of penance, to keep him in his cell for five months, with no other allowance than a little bread, salt and water. A young man named Sylvanus, who had been an actor on the stage, entered the monastery, with the view of doing penance, but for some time led an undisciplined life, often transgressing the rules of the house, and still fond of entertaining himself and others with buffooneries. The saint endeavored to make him sensible of his danger by charitable remonstrances, and also employed his more potent arms of prayer, sighs, and tears, for his poor soul. Though for some time he found his endeavors fruitless, he did not desist on that account, and having one day represented to this impenitent sinner, in a very pathetic manner, the dreadful judgments which threaten those that mock God, the divine grace touching the heart of Sylvanus, he from that moment began to lead a life of great edifica-

tion to the rest of the brethren; and being moved with the most feeling sentiments of compunction, he never failed wheresoever he was, and howsoever employed, to bewail with bitterness his past misdemeanors. When others would entreat him to moderate the floods of his tears. "Ah, said he", "how can I help weeping, when I consider the wretchedness of my past life, and that by my sloth I have profaned what was most sacred? I have reason to fear lest the earth should open under my feet, and swallow me up, as it did Dathan and Abiron, Oh, suffer me to labor with everflowing fountain of tears, to expiate my innumerable sins. I ought if I could, even to put forth this wretched soul of mine in mourning; it would be all too little for my offenses." In these sentiments of contrition, he made so great progress in virtue, that the holy Abbot propose him as a model of humility to the rest; and when, after eight years spent in this penitential course, God had called him to himself by a hold death, St. Pachoneius was assured by a revelation, that his soul presented by angels a most pleasing and agreeable sacrifice to Christ. The saint was favored with a spirit of prophecy, and with great grief foretold the decay of monastic fervor in his order in succeeding ages. In 348 he was cited before a council of bishops at Latopolis, to answer certain matters laid to his charge. He justified

himself against the calumniators, but in such a manner the whole council admired his extraordinary humility. The same year God afflicted his monasteries with a pestilence, which swept off a hundred monks. The saint himself fell sick and during forty days suffered a painful distemper with incredible patience and cheerfulness, discovering a great interior joy at the approach of the end of his earthly pilgrimage. In his last moments he exhorted his monks to fervor, and having armed himself with the sign of the Cross, resigned his happy soul in the hands of his creator in the fifty-seventh year of his age. He lived to see in his different monasteries seven thousand monks. His order subsisted in the East till the eleventh century. Anselm, bishop of Havelburgh, writes that he saw five hundred monks of this institution in a monastery at Constantinople.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### NEGRO MARTYRS. ST. JULIA, VIRGIN AND MARTYR.

St. Julia, Virgin and Martyr was a noble virgin at Carthage, who when that city was taken by Genseric, in 439, was sold for a slave to a pagan merchant of Syria. Under the most mortifying employments of her station, by cheerfulness and patience, she found, besides her sanctification, a present happiness and comfort, which the world could not have afforded. All the time she was not employed in her masters business, was devoted to prayer and reading books of piety. She fasted very rigourously every day, but Sunday; nor could all the entreaties of her master, who was charmed with her fidelity and virtues, nor the hardships of her situation, prevail with her to be more tender with herself. The merchant thought proper to carry her with him in one of his voyages to Gaul, where he imported the most valuable commodities of the Levant. Having reached the northern part of Corsica, or that point now called Capo-Corso, he cast anchor and went on shore to join the pagans of the place in an idolatrous festival kept there at that time, with the sacrifice of a bull. Julia was left at some distance, because she would not be defiled by the superstitious ceremonies, which she openly reviled. Felix, the Governor

of the Island, who was a bigoted pagan, ask the merchant who this woman was, who dared to insult the gods. He informed him that she was a Christian, and that all his authority over her was too weak to prevail with her to renounce her religion, but that he found her so diligent and faithful he could not part with her. The governor offered him four of his best female slaves in exchange for her. But the merchant, whose name was Eusebius, replied: "No, all you are worth will not purchase her, for I would freely lose the most valuable thing I have in the world, rather than be deprived of her." However, the governor, while Eusebius was drunk and asleep, took upon him to compel her to sacrifice to his gods. He proffered her liberty if she would comply. The saint made an answer that she was as free as she desired to be, as long as she was allowed to serve Jesus Christ; and whatever happen, she would never purchase her liberty by so abominable a crime. Felix thinking himself derided by her undaunted and resolute air, in a transport of rage, caused her to be struck on the face, and the hair of her head to be torn off; and lastly ordered her to be hanged on a cross till she expired. Certain monks of the Isle of Gorgon (which is now called La Gorgona, and lies between Corsica and Leghorn; carried off her body; but in 763, Desiderius, king of Lombardy, removed her relics to Bres-

cia, where her memory is celebrated with great devotion. St. Julia, whether free or a slave, whether in property or in adversity, was equally fervent and devout. She adored all the sweet designs of providence, and far from complaining, she never ceased to praise and thank God under all his holy appointments, making them always the means of her virtue and sanctification. God, by an admirable chain of events, raised her by her fidelity to the honor of the saints, and to the dignity of a virgin and martyr.

#### ST. JAMES AND ST. MARIAN, MARTYRS.

During the great Valerian persecution in Numidia, in 259. At Lambesa the greatest city of the province, next to Cirtha, great numbers suffered Martyrdom. St. James was a deacon of that place, and remarkable for his singular chastity and austerity of life. St. Marian was only a reader, but endued with a particular eminence of grace. They were companions, and relatives, and come from a remote province of Africa into Numidia. James received on the road a vision, that gave them previous notice of their martyrdom. They arrived at a place called Muguas, near Cirtha, the capital, where the persecution was raging. As they were detained here for some time or days, James and Marian enjoyed the conversation, of two bishops, who were condemned to

die for the faith, which excited them to an eager desire of martyrdom, in so much that, when the two bishops left Muguas to continue their journey, James and Marian were fully determined to follow them. Two days after their departure, James and Marian were apprehended, and conducted to Cirtha, together with a bishop; the author of the acts of their martyrdom, and presented to the city magistrates, who put them to the most cruel tortures. James confessed that he was not only a Christian, but also a deacon, though the Valerian law of 258, condemned to death without hopes of pardon, even though they should deny their faith, all deacons, priests and bishops. They were both put to the torture, and Marian in particular was hung up, not by the hands, which was the usual method of torture, but by his thumbs, which was far more painful, weights being also hung to his feet. Amidst his torments, the more his body suffered, the more was his soul strengthened by God. The martyrs having undergone the torture as long as the persecutors thought proper, were sent to prison, with several other Christians. They passed some time in the darkness and horror of the dungeons of Cirtha, tormented also with hunger; but the word of God was a spiritual food that supported them. God moreover, was pleased to comfort them in their prison, by a vision vouchsafed to Marian, to whom St. Cy-

prian appeared sitting at the right hand of a great Judge, who was Christ, and presenting Marian to drink of a fountain of which that holy bishop had first drunk himself; giving Marian thereby to understand that he was also to suffer martyrdom. God gave an assurance of the same favor to this whole company of prisoners, by a second vision, with which he favored another of these confessors, called Emilian, of the Equestrian order, near fifty years old, who had lived till that age in strict continency. All these visions contributed not a little to keep up the spirits of the Christian prisoners. The magistrates of Cirtha, seeing the confessors invincible, sent James, Marian, and a great part of the prisoners to Lambesa, to the governor of the province. They suffered much on the way, it being twenty-four miles distance from Cirtha, and the roads very rough. They were lodged in the dungeons of Lambesa, and every day some were called out to martyrdom; the laity first, whom the pagans hoped more easily to vanquish. Among them a woman and her two little children, twins, were martyred on the 2nd or 3rd of May. Also Tertulla and Antonia, two holy virgins, whom St. Agapius had singular regard for. He prayed long in prison that they might not be deprived of the glory of shedding their blood for Christ, and at length received from heaven this answer: "You need not ask by so many

prayers what you have obtained by the first." St. James and the other clergy were grieved to see their victory retarded, but it was not long before he saw in his sleep the bishop Agapius preparing a great feast, and expressing much joy, and cheerfully inviting him and Marian to it, as to one of the ancient Agapae, or love feasts. Here they met an infant who was one of the twins that had suffered with their mother three days before. He had around his neck a crown of roses, and a very green palm in his right hand; and he bade them rejoice, for they should all come together the day following, the same on which Marian, James, and several others of the clergy were condemned to die. They were accordingly brought to the place of execution, which was a valley, through which ran the river, Pagydus, with hills on each side convenient for the spectators. The martyrs were placed in rows on the banks of the river, that the executioner might pass conveniently from one to the other in cutting off their heads. While they had their eyes bound, they had most of them some token given them by God of their approaching felicity. Marian also foretold the wars, and other evils which threatened the empire in revenge of the innocent blood of the just. This was verified, the prosecuting emperor Valerian being taken and most barbarously treated by the Persians, in 260, together with other calam-

ities which afflicted the empire. Mary, the mother of this blessed martyr, followed her son to the place of execution to encourage him, and blessed God for having made her the mother of such a son. Their triumph happened in 259 or 260, probably on the 6th of May, on which the ancient Calender of Carthage, drawn up in the close of the fifth century mentions them.

#### ST. SPERATUS AND COMPANIONS.

St. Speratus and His Companions. Severius after his victory over the Kings who had taken part with Nigar against him, published an edict against the Christians in the year of Christ 202, the tenth of his reign. The first who suffered at Carthage were twelve persons, commonly called the Scilletan Martyrs, because they were natives of Scilletan, a town of the proconsular Africa. They were brought prisoners to Carthage, and on the 16th of July were presented to the proconsular whilst he was seated on his tribunal. The six principal ones, among them were Speratus, Narzalis, and Cittinus, and three women, Donata, Secunda, and Vestina. The proconsular offered them the emperor's pardon if they would worship the gods of the Romans. Speratus answered in the name of all: "We have never committed any crime, we have injured no one; so far from it, we have always thanked God

for the evil treatment we have received; wherefore we declare to you that we worship no other God but the true one, Who is the Lord and Master of all things; we pray for those who persecute us unjustly, according to the law we have received.” The proconsular urged them to swear by the emperor’s genius. Speratus said, I know not the genius of the emperor of this world, but I serve the God of heaven, whom no mortal man hath ever seen or can see. I never committed any crime punishable by the laws of the State. I pay the public duties for whatever I buy, acknowledging the emperor for my temporal lord; but I adore none but my God, who is the King of Kings, and sovereign Lord over all the nations in the world. I have been guilty of no crime, and therefore cannot have incurred punishment.” Hereupon the proconsul said, “Let them be carried to prison and put in the wooden stocks till tomorrow.” On the following day, the proconsul being seated on his tribunal, ordered them all to be brought before him, and said to the women, “Honor our prince, and offer sacrifices to the gods.” Donata replied: “We give to Caesar the honor that is due to Caesar, but we adore and offer sacrifice to God alone.” Vestina said, “I also am a Christian. Secunda said, “I also believe in God, and will continue faithful to him. As for your gods we will neither serve nor

adore them.” The proconsul then ordered them into custody, and having called up the men, he said, to Speratus: Art thou still resolved to remain a Christian? Speratus replied, “Yes, I am, and let it known to all, I am a Christian.” All that had been apprehended with him cried out: “We are also Christians.” The proconsul said: “Will you not then so much as deliberate upon the matter, or have any favor shown you?” Speratus replied: “Do what you please, we, die with joy for the sake of Jesus Christ.” The proconsul asked, “What books are those which you read and have in reverence?” Speratus answered: “The four Gospels of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the epistles of the apostle St. Paul, and the rest of the scriptures, revealed by God.” The proconsul said: “I give you three days to repent in. Upon which Speratus made answer: “We will never depart from the faith of our Saviour Jesus Christ, therefore take what course you think fit.” The proconsul seeing their constancy and resolution, pronounced sentence against them in these terms: Speratus, Narzalis, Cittinus, Vesturius, Felix, Acylinus, Laetantius, Januaria, Generosa, Vestina, Donata and Secunda, having acknowledged themselves Christians, and having refused to pay due honor and respect to the emperor, I condemn them to be beheaded.” This sentence being

read, Speratus, and all those who were with him, said, "We give thanks to God for vouchsafing to receive us martyrs in heaven, for confessing his name." Having said this, they were led to the place of execution, where they all fell on their knees, and once more gave thanks to Jesus Christ. Whilst they continued in prayer, their heads were struck off. The faithful who transcribed their acts out of the public registers add: "The martyrs of Christ finished their conflict in the month of July, and they intercede for us to our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be given honor and glory with the Father and Holy Ghost through all ages." We are told by Tertullian, who soon after their martyrdom, addressed his excellent apologetic discourse for the Christian religion to the governors of the provinces, but without success. That Saturnius, who first drew the sword against the Christians in Africa, soon after lost his eyes. As to the emperor Severus, after carrying on the persecution ten years, whilst he was making war in Britain, being on his march with his army his eldest son Bassianus, surnamed Antonius Caracalla, who marched after him, stopped his horse and drew his sword to stab him, but was prevented by others. Severus only reproached him for it, but died soon after at York, of grief for his son's treachery, rather than of the gout, on the 4th of February in the year 211, having

lived sixty-five years, and reigned seventeen years and eight months. His two sons succeeded him, but the elder caused the latter to be stabbed in his mother's bosom.

S. S. NEMESIAN, FELIX, LUCIUS AND  
ANOTHER FELIX, LITTEUS, POLIA-  
MUS, VICTOR, JADER, AND  
DATIUS, BISHOPS AND  
OTHERS.

S. S. Nemesian, Felix, Lucius, another Felix, Litteus, Poliamus, Victor, Jader, and Datius, Bishops; with many Priests, Deacons, and other Companions, part Martyrs, part Confessors, in Numidia, who were all natives of Africa suffered in the first year of the eight general persecution, raised by Valerian. But of this holy company some were frequently called to be tormented, or inhumanly butchered, whilst others continued their lingering martyrdom in hunger, nakedness, and filth, exhausted with hard labor, and tormented with daily stripes, and perpetual reproaches and insults. St. Cyprian who had been banished to Aurubis, wrote to comfort and encourage these gallant sufferers for their faith. He tells them, that learning of their glorious conflicts, he earnestly desired to wait upon them in person, and hasten to their embraces, but was not able, being himself in banishment, and confined to the limits of the place appointed for

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him. He adds, “Yet in heart and spirit I am with you, and my letter must perform the office of my tongue, in expressing to you the joy of my soul for the glory of your virtues, and the share I reckon myself to have in it, though not by a participation of your sufferings, yet, by the communion of charity. It is impossible for me to be silent when I hear such glorious things of my nearest and dearest friends, whom the favorable providence of God hath vouchsafed to honor with such extraordinary graces, some of your happy company having already attained the crown of martyrdom, whilst others stay yet behind in bonds, or in the mines, and by the delay of their consummation, encourage our brethren to follow their example, and to aspire after like honors with them. Their slow and lingering torments enhance their crowns, and each day of their continuance in a state of suffering will entitle them to a distinct reward. That our Lord should prefer you to the highest honors, I cannot wonder, since you have all along proceeded in one regular uniform course of faith and obedience, and the Church hath ever found you peaceable and orderly members, diligent and faithful in charge committed to you; careful always of the poor, vigorous and constance in defense of the truth, firm and strict in your observance of her discipline”, (viz: never giving into the faction of those who encourage

unreasonable relaxations;) and to crown your other virtues you now, by your example, lead the rest of your brethren to martyrdom. As to the entrance you made upon your gallant confession by being beaten with clubs, Christians should not shrink at a club, who have all their hopes founded in the wood of the cross, by which they were redeemed unto life eternal. A servant of Christ discerns in wood a figure of his salvation, and embraces in it the instrument by which he is preferred to the martyr's glory. They have manacled your feet with fittersmarked with infamy; but they cannot reach your souls, and that iron sits rather as an ornament upon persons devoted to God. Happy are the feet so bound, which are moving forward in their blessed journey to paradise; you have nothing but the ground to receive your weary limbs after the labors of the day; but surely you will not account it punishment to lie on the ground with your master, Christ. Your bodies are loathsome and nasty for want of bathing, but your spirits are cleansed innerman proportionably as the flesh of the outer suffers through dirt and filth. Your bread is poor and scanty; but man doth not live by bread alone, by the word of God. You are in want of clothing to keep out the cold; but he who hath put on Christ is abundantly clothed and adorned. The hair of your head, when half of it shaved, hath a dismal

and ignominious aspect; but nothing can unbecome a head, renowned for its adherence to Christ. How will these deformities, which make such a shocking appearance in the eye of the Gentile world, be recompensed in eternal glory with honors proportionable to your disgrace. Neither can your religion suffer, even from that hard circumstance, that the priests among you have not liberty, nor the opportunity to offer, and celebrate the divine sacrifice; but you present yourselves victims to God with the sacrifice of a contrite and humble heart, which he will not despise, and which you cease not to offer day and night." The holy Archbishop goes on pathetically encouraging the confessors to take the cup of salvation with readiness and alacrity, and receive with courage and constancy that death which is precious in the sight of God, who graciously looks down upon their conflict, approves and assists their ardor, and crowns them when victorious, recompensing the virtues which he himself hath wrought in them. That great saint puts them in mind that their crowns would be multiplied by all those whom their courage should excite to virtue. Accordingly, says he, a great number of our lay-brethren have followed your example have confessed our Lord, and stand thence entitled to a crown with you; as being united to you in the bonds of an invincible charity, and not suffering themselves to be divided from their

bishops, either in the mines, or in the prisons. Nor are you without the company of tender virgins, who move forward to their crown with double title virgins, and martyrs. Even the courage of children hath approved itself beyond their age, another glory of their confession hath surpassed their years; so that your blessed troop of martyrs hath each age and sex to adorn it. How strong, my beloved brethren, is even now the sense of your victory! How joyful must it be to you to consider that each of you stand in readiness to receive the promised recompense at the hands of God, that you are secure of the issues of the last Judgment: that Christ affordeth you his gracious presence, and rejoiceth to see the fortitude and patience of his servants who follow his steps to their joyous crown. You live in daily expectation of being dismissed to your proper home, to your heavenly habitation." The confessors thanked the saint for his letter, which, they say, had alleviated their stripes and hardships, and rendered them insensible of those noisome exhalations with which the place of their confinement abounded. They tell him, that by gloriously confessing his faith in the proconsuls court, and going before them into banishment, he had sounded the charge to them, and animated all the soldiers of God to the conflict. They concluded by begging his prayers, that God and Christ, and the whole choir of angels

may lend us favorable succor when we shall most want it." This glorious company of saints is commemorated on this day the tenth of September in the Roman Martyrology.

#### TWELVE BROTHERS, MARTYRS.

Twelve Brothers, Martys. Felix, Donatus, Arontius, Honoratus, Fortunatus, Sabinianus, Septiminus, Januarius, Felix, Vitalis, Satyrus, and Repositus, were natives of Adrimentum in Africa, and after suffering grievous torments for the faith in their native city, were sent into Italy, where they finieshd their glorious martyrdom at Benevento, in the persecution of Valerian in 258, or according to others in that of Dioclesian. About the same time St. Augustine mentions the Massylitan Martyrs who after having suffered with fortitude and courage gave up their pure souls to God in their native land from whence comes their name Massyla. Mansuetus, bishop of Uri, was burnt at the gate of Furnes, while the Noble Papi-nian, Bishop of Vita was burnt with red hot bars of iron. Fortitude, which appears most heroical and most conspicuous in martyrdom, is a cardinal virtue, and the mother of many glo-rious virtues, as courage, greatness of soul, tranquillity of mind under all dangers, pa-tience, longanimity, constancy, and persever-ance. It is the band and support of all other virtues. As a root of a tree bears the trunk,

branches, flowers, and fruit, so fortitude sustains, and is the strength of the whole system of moral and Christian virtues which sink at the first shock without it. This therefore, is the ingredient of every perfect virtue, by which a man is ready to suffer any hardships or death, to expose himself to any dangers, and to forgo all temporal advantages rather than sever from the path of justice. By confounding rashness, inconsiderate hardness, and fury, with courage, many form a false idea of fortitude, which is defined, "a considerate alacrity in bearing hardships and undergoing dangers." It moderates in us the two opposite extremes of fear and confidence, it teaches us reasonably to fear dangers and death, and to decline and avoid them, when nothing obliges us to expose ourselves to them, for to be foolhardy and needlessly to precipitate ourselves upon danger, is the height of folly and vice, and the strongest mark of a corrupt and abandoned heart. But it is true fortitude to undertake and encounter all dangers, when duty or the cause of virtue requires it. How noble and heroical is this virtue of fortitude, how necessary in every Christian, especially in a pastor of souls, that neither worldly views nor fears may ever in the least warp his integrity, or blind his judgment.

S. S. SATURNIUS AND DATIVUS, MARTYRS OF AFRICA.

S. S. Saturnius, Dativus and many other Martyrs of Africa. Dioclesian the emperor commanded all the Christians, under pain of death, to deliver up the holy scriptures to be burnt. This persecution had raged a whole year in Africa; some had betrayed the cause of religion, but many more defended it with their blood, when these saints were apprehended. Arbitina, a city of the proconsul province of Africa, was the theatre of their triumph. Saturnius, priest of the city, celebrated the divine mysteries on a Sunday, in the house of Octavius Felix. The magistrates having notice of it, came with a troop of soldiers, and seized forty-nine persons of both sexes. The principles among them were the priest Saturnius, with four children, viz: Young Saturnius, and Felix, both Lectors, Mary, who had consecrated her virginity to God and Hilarianus, yet a child, also Dativus, a noble senator, Ampelius- Rogatianus, and Victoria. Dativus, the ornament of the senate of Abitina, whom God destined to be one of the principal senators of heaven, marched at the head of the holy troop. Saturnius walked by his side, surrounded by his illustrious family. The others followed in silence. Being brought before the magistrate, they confessed Jesus Christ so res-

olutely, that their very Judges applauded their courage, which repaired the infamous sacrilige committed there a little before by Fundamus, the bishop of Abitina, who in that same place had given up to the magistrates the sacred books to be burnt; but a violent shower suddenly falling, put out the fire, and a prodigious hail ravaged the whole country.

The confessors were shackled and sent to Carthage, the residence of the proconsul. They rejoiced to see themselves in chains for Christ, and sung hymns and canticles during their whole journey to Carthage, praising and thanking God. The proconsul, Amulinus, addressing himself first to Dativus, asked him of what condition he was, and if he had assisted at the collect or assembling of the Christians. He answered, that he was a Christian, and had been present at it. The proconsul bid him discover who presided, and in whose house those religious assemblies were held; but without waiting for his answer, commanded him to be put on the rack and torn with iron hooks, to oblige him to a discovery. They underwent the severe tortures of the rack, iron hooks, and cudgles. The weaker sex fought no less gloriously, particularly the illustrious Victoria, who being converted to Christ in her tender years, had signified a desire of leading a single life, which her pagan parents would not agree to, having promised her in

marriage to a rich young nobleman. Victoria on the day appointed for the wedding full of confidence in the protection of Him, whom she had chosen for the only spouse of her soul, leaped out of a window, and was miraculously preserved from hurt. Having made her escape, she took shelter in a church, after which she consecrated her virginity to God with the ceremonies then used on such occasions at Carthage, Italy, Gaul and all over the west. To the crown of virginity, she earnestly desired to join that of martyrdom. The proconsul, on account of her quality, and for the sake of her brother, a pagan, tried all means to prevail with her to renounce her faith. He inquired what was her religion. Her answer was: "I am a Christian." Her brother Fortunatus, undertook her defense, and endeavored to prove her a lunatic. The saint fearing his plea might be the means of her losing the crown of martyrdom, made it appear by her wise confutations of it, that she was in her perfect senses, and protested that she had not been brought over to Christianity against her will. The proconsul asked her if she would return with her brother? She said, "She could not, being a Christian, and acknowledging none as brethren but those who kept the law of God." The proconsul then laid aside the quality of Judge to become her humble suppliant, and entreated her not to throw away her life. But

she rejected his entreaties with disdain, and said to him: "I have already told you my mind. I am a Christian, and I assist at the collect." Amulinus, provoked at this constancy, reassumed his rage and ordered her to prison with the rest, to wait the sentence of death which he not long after pronounced upon them all. The proconsul would yet try to gain Hilarianus. Saturnius' youngest son not doubting to vanquish one of his tender age. But the child showed more contempt than fear of the tyrants threats, and answered his interrogatories: "I am a Christian, I have been at the collect, and it was of my own voluntary choice, without any compulsion." The proconsul threatened him with those little punishments with which children are accustomed to be chastised, little knowing that God himself fights in his martyrs. The child only laughed at him. The governor said to him: "I will cut off your nose and ears." Hilarianus replied: "You may do it, but I am a Christian." The proconsul, dissembling his confusion ordered him to prison. Upon which the child said: "Lord I give thee thanks." These martyrs ended their lives under hardships of confinement, and are honored in the Ancient Calendar of Carthage and the Roman Martyrology, on the 11th of February, though only two died on that day of these wounds. The example of these martyrs condemns the sloth

with which many Christians in this age celebrated the Lord's Day. Even the Judge asked them how they durst presume to hold their assemblies against the imperial orders, they always repeated, even on the rack, "The obligation of the Sunday indispensable. It is not lawful for us to omit the duty of that day. We celebrated it as well as we could. We never passed a Sunday without meeting at our assembly. We will keep the commandments of God at the expense of our lives." No dangers nor torments could deter them from this duty. A rare example of fervor in keeping that holy precept, from which too many, upon lame pretense, seek to excuse themselves. As the Jew was known by the religious observance of the Sabbath, so is the true Christian by his manner of celebrating the Sunday. And as our law is more holy and more perfect than the Jewish, so must be our manner of sanctifying the Lord's Day. This is the proof of religion, and of our piety towards God. The primitive Christians kept this day in the most holy manner, assembling to public prayer in dens and caves, knowing that without this religious observance, a man cannot be a Christian, to use the expression of the ancient fathers.

## CHAPTER IX.

### VIRGINITY OF NEGRO WOMEN OR NEGRO NUNS.

Since the time of St. Anthony, father of the desert, who established the first regular monastery for women, by making his sister Abbessy, and St. Augustine who followed his example by giving his sister with some other devout women a monastic rule of life. Virginity has been followed by women of our race, down to the present century. Today we have many native sisterhoods in Africa and America, not to speak of those that are connected with various white orders. In Senegambia it was a most pleasing sight to see the native sisters, on retreat proceeding the profession, and the investiture with the habit of several of the novices. The election of a new Superior General took place at the same time; for the Rev. Mother Mary Joosephine, who was for nearly ten years in that responsible position died April the 16th, 1904, mourned by the community over which she presided with such success. She was born in the little village of Goree, in 1833 and was known in the world as Theresa Sagna. With Louise St. John, afterwards Sister Mary, she received the habit from Bishop Kobe on July the 9th, 1858. Her years were many and blessed with the most fruitful results. The election and installation took place Au-

gust the 10th in the community Chapel after Mass. There was a short address appropriate to the occasion, after which the nuns, one after the other on their knees, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, wrote out their votes and deposited them in the little urn placed to receive them. When all had been finished, it was found that Mother Iphigenia had been elected almost unanimously. She was then proclaimed Superior General and her election was confirmed according to the constitutions; which was followed by solemn benediction. The newly elected made her profession of faith and then, seated at the foot of the altar, she received the electors who, on bended knees, repeated the form, "I promise you reverence and obedience according to the rules and constitutions. Then came the general chapter of the congregation of native sisters, and in the evening the ceremony of the profession and the investiture of the novices. Thus the day, filled with so many consoling and beautiful incidents, ended with a solemn Te Deum in thanksgiving to God for all His blessings. These ceremonies have a peculiar and touching character for which reason we have presented to our readers as no doubt many of them are not familiar with these important facts. Togo, in Africa, Kaiser Wilhelmsland in New Guinea, South Africa, or Natal, Porto Seguro, and in fact wherever there is a Catholic Church or

Mission in Africa, we find women of our race, not only performing the ordinary duties of a Christian, but following the monastic life in all its perfection. In the United States of America, back as far as ninety years ago, in the State of Kentucky, negro women, notwithstanding the rank prejudice, of the people, and the condition of the negroes even before Protestantism recognized that the slaves were human beings, and while the States controlled by them made it a crime to teach the negro, the Catholic Church was elevating and teaching some of them the sublime and heroic virtue of virginity; and forming them as missionaries, for the Christian education of the future mothers of our race. The noble Oblates Sisters of Providence of Baltimore, whose existence dates back almost one hundred years, are bright examples of the religious capabilities of our women. Their work as educators and their pure lives have exerted a beneficial influence in every negro home, as well as winning the respect and admiration of all classes in America. They have schools, hospitals, orphanages, home for homeless girls. The illustrious Sisters of the Holy Family, whose great work is well known in New Orleans, St. Louis and Leavenworth and other cities. A striking example of Christian charity and victory over race prejudice, which is seldom seen is furnished by the city of Savannah. White sisters

and colored sisters living in one community, devoting their pure lives to the care of colored children. Noble women, who renounce all softness, superfluities, and vanity of life, and engage and persevere in a life of so much severity. Who embrace their holy calling with a fervor which inspires a cheerful eagerness to comply in the most perfect manner, with all its rules and exercises, and who are seriously studying to obtain, and daily improve, in their souls, her eminent spirit of poverty, humility, obedience, love of silence, mortification, recollection, prayer, and divine love. In this consists their sanctification; in this they find all present and future blessings and happiness. "How lovely are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! How beautiful, O Church, are thy religious institutions, and how well marshalled are thy spiritual battalions! How great the number of fervent souls who enjoy, by anticipation, the felicity of the elect, in praising God incessantly, and in living on this earth, by the exercise of holy love, as live the seraphs in the heavenly Jerusalem".

**PART II.**

**THE PRESENT.**

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**CHAPTER X.**

**THE CALL OF TO-DAY.**

That same voice of Holy Mother, the Church, through her missionaries, is heard to-day as in past ages, "Go ye into the whole world and preach my Gospel." In Africa, as well as America, and wherever the negro is found, the great work of the Catholic Church is being continued in reclaiming and bringing back the children of that once holy land, land of illustrious men, renowned doctors, saints, martyrs, and holy virgins, crying to them in a loud voice, "Remember the rock from whence you were hewed." In Africa all is fresh ground, and the present day finds every part of the continent covered and the prospects exceedingly bright. From the depths of the Jungles inhabited by cannibals, missionaries are transforming the ferocious Bondjos, ravening wolves, into lambs; the expression "ravering wolves", is not used as a figure of speech; the term expresses a truth. Gratifying, an consoling is the news that comes from the missions of the Fathers of the Holy Ghost and Immaculate Heart of Mary, whose second

Father General was a negro and which order has numbered among its members many distinguished and zealous men of our race. The fruits of the Missionaries labors are always counted upon at Eastertime; in 1905 the harvest was greater than ever before. In all parts there has been a larger attendance at services, numerous communions, and a marked increase in the number of baptisms and catechumen. The same message comes from the Upper Nile, where the Fathers of Mill Hill, under the guidance of Bishop Hanlon, have established a most beautiful mission. Also the magnificent vicariates of the White Fathers, whose founder the great Cardinal Lavigerie, who successfully aroused the whole of Europe to combat, and destroy the abominable slave traffic, are doing splendid work. They have at present seven Vicariates and one Perfecture Apostolic, 95 Missions and 384 missionary priests, 84 of whom are black. They are scattered in Northern and Equatorial Africa over a territory nearly as large as the United States, and comprising a colored population of 20,000,000 Many of them are laboring on so fertile a field, that, on great feast days, scenes similar to the primitive or Augustine days of the Church are repeated. Franciscans, Capuchins, Jesuits, Lazarists, priests of the African Mission of Lyons, Oblates of Mary. Members of the Society of Mary of Arignon of

Montfoot, Pallotus, Benedictines, Premonstratensians, Fathers of Steyl, Trappists missionaries of Schent, who have established a most important mission in Belgium Congo, Oblates of St. Francis de Sales on the shores of the Orange River and Namaqualano and a great number of native priests, not belonging to any of the above orders, these different representatives of the pacific Army of Christ have penetrated everywhere to invite the tribes of Fetichists and Mussulmans to come out from darkness in which, for so long a time, they have been living a degraded existence. When Bishop Allard landed at Port Durban or Natal, in 1850, no Catholic priest had till then taken up his abode in those parts. A large number of natives, about 1,500,000 Kafirs, Zulus, Bechmanas, and Basutos, reputed incapable of any elevation of thought, there were many obstacles in the way, there were 8,000 Protestants among the whites who required attention, moreover, resources were entirely too scant among a people who had nothing themselves to give. Nevertheless in the last six years, the number of priests has risen from eighteen to nearly one hundred and fifty, thirty or forty of whom are native or negro priests, sixty Trappists Fathers, who have a church which was designed and built by the native boys of their school; it is said to be the most beautiful church in Africa; that of schools and

hospitals from twenty to sixty-one. Six congregations of sisters, the sisters of the Holy Family of Bordeaux, the Dominicans, and the sisters of Nazareth, all engaged in the vineyard of the Master. The work of evangelization is being pressed among the 450,000 blacks of the vicariate of Orange Free State. A number of the Missionaries, who followed the army during the war, have resumed their work, seven flourishing stations with 15 schools, and colleges and 12 churches and chapels. On account of their discredency in paganism, there are 400,000 Negroes of the Basutoland prefecture waiting to enter the fold of Jesus Christ, provided churches could be erected fast enough; but unfortunately those that are rapidly growing too small, cannot even be enlarged for want of funds. There are over thirty priests, ten of whom are natives, assisted by 70 lay brothers. In Columbo Father Rodriguez, a colored priest and late vicar general of Columbo, tells us that they have 400 schools with an average attendance of 30,000, ten orphanages harboring 400 children, 4 large colleges with 900 students, native Brothers and Sisters are among the teachers. Catholics number over 400,000. Togo, Kaiser Wilhelmsland in Guinea, Pomerania, and Monumbo, where polygamy held the negro within its grasp and Fettichism with its superstitions and immoral customs were serious obstacles to the Catholic

missionary thirty years ago; today Christianity has become a power in those regions, flourishing schools for boys with 500 pupils and girls schools conducted by the sisters with an attendance of 400. At present these missions, have 54 priests, 10 of whom are natives or negroes. They have about 60 lay brothers, and 70 native teachers. The baptized Catholics average nearly 8,000. The prefecture of Upper Nigger is a most striking example of apostolic zeal, for the honor and glory of God, in an humble layman of the race. Among the adults baptized at Ibonzo, in 1901, there was a poor father of a family, by the name of Ayaeze, for two years attended regularly the Christian instructions at the station of Ibonzo, several times a week, he traveled five miles, going and coming, for he dearly loved to hear the word of God. To ask why he was determined to come what sustained his constancy despite his feebleness, despite tropical rains, is to ask why the spirit breathes here rather than there. The answer must come from the other side of the vault of the heavens, or rather when it shall be broken.

All that is known that this catechumen persevered till the day of his baptism when he received the name of Peter, he not only imitated the resolute force of his patron, but what is better still, he persevered with the same energy. Even more, God never does things by

halves, the new Christian once enrolled under the standard of Jesus Christ, never thought that by so doing his work was done, on the contrary, from the very day on which he was admitted to the ranks, obedient to the advice of the missionary who had instructed and baptized him, he constituted himself the apostle of Good Tidings in his village, as every rule has an exception, contrary to the well known adage, "he became a prophet in his own country" as the apostles were in theirs. His very name was prophetic, for it signified, "The war of the Kings," little did his father surmise what King his son would serve when he so named him. Poor and without the least spark of wordly knowledge yet superior to many of the educated and so called civilized of his tribe, knowing nothing, but the catechism which the missionary had been teaching him for two years, he set himself to hard work, and soon assembled about him, morning and evening a small number of men of good will, to these he began to teach the sign of the cross and prayers. The commencement was not a brilliant success, ridicule, the cause of discouragement to so many Christians, was not lacking; there were even cases of desertion; a union formed in the village and the little band of Catechumens were exposed to all kinds of annoyances; and, as upon renouncing the cult of idols, they had, at the same time given up

the practice of throwing charms against thieves, an expedient much in vague among pagans, it became an easy matter and very tempting to single them out for victims. Courage! Peter would say to his little flock at every fresh trial. Courage, iron cannot be forged without beating it on the anvil. One day his poor little goat disappeared, he himself comforted them. "That goat," said he, "was stolen because I am teaching you the commandments of God, far from saddening, it rejoices me, for I know that I shall find my goat on the other side, and many little ones besides, if the thieves think they are going to close my lips in this way, they are making a mistake." Meanwhile, God showed that he was watching over His servants and that in an evident manner. Peter and his flock of Catechumens conceived the thought of building a little chapel; once it had entered their minds to do so, they thought they could take their clay for a bed, the common property of the people. A few influential chiefs presented a strong opposition. "Take the earth that was property in common to build a church? Never should this be done." The Catechists implored, protested, and showed himself ready to accept all kinds of conditions, all his efforts were futile. "Well," he said, after he had exhausted all his resources, "the chapel which we want to build is not our dwelling, it is the

house of God. You refuse to let us have the earth which everybody may use for building. Very good, God knows what he will do." You may easily guess with what raillery this declaration was received. Only three days had passed when, one evening, on his return from the fields, Peter heard loud cries in the direction of the village, such as are uttered when a chief dies. When he arrived home he soon learned their cause, the chief who had been most stubborn to resist the building of the chapel had finished his sneer, a sudden death had overtaken him. This occurred less than two years ago; today, only two of the eight chiefs who refused the earth are living. Since then, everybody is afraid of Peter. "Please do not speak the name of God among us," they often say, your God has too many ears." God who makes an apostle of one man, and a doctor of another has endowed this neophyte with such a frailty of speech and repartee that it is hard for any one else to get in the last word. It is a pleasure to read some of his smart replies. One day, somebody gave him the usual excuse for not going to church. When all Okpanam goes, then I shall go." The answer was not long coming. "Did you wait for your son to introduce you into the world?" Another said with greater candor, I shall never be one of you." Still, answered Peter, "You never throw away the sauce before tasting it, look at

us; do you see any with chains on our feet? Come and taste the sauce; then, if it does not suit you, throw it away." It is all very good to pray to God," another said, "but too many things are forbidden by your church; it is too hard to have only one wife." "The woman who gives birth to her first child is anxious about it a long time before; when her child is born, however, she sees that she was wrong to be so troubled. You have never tried to keep the commandments; try and you will see. "Oh, I have plenty of time," the father of a family once said to him, "later on I will think about it." When you are at work and notice the shadows of the trees getting longer, you say to yourself that you must hurry to finish what you have to do; look, your shadow is already longer than that of your son, so the evening is not far off and the arm of God will lengthen slowly to draw you in. With sermons of this nature, and, particularly, by giving an example of strong hope and firm faith, he succeeded in collecting a large flock, who gathered in church to attend his explanations of the Catechism. How great was the joy of Peter, the day he saw his first group of Catechumens enter the fold of the church.

In Dahomey the great provider of human flesh. If servitude lowers the mind and heart of man, who can number the difficulties in the way of conversions that have been engendered

by centuries of slavery. The elements, man and devils seem to combine, to paralyze all efforts of the missionaries. What is impossible to man is not so to Him who said to the Apostles: "Preach the Gospel to every creature." At the word of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, telling them to throw the net into the waters of Guinea, the Missionaries, in all humility and confidence, responded: "At thy word I will throw the net." Conversion presupposes two things: the disappearance of obstacles and the adoption of the new religion. Hence within the last fifty years Dahomey, the Benin coast, the Gold coast, Upper Niger and Ivory Coast, as well as in Egypt prejudice against Christianity has either altogether vanished or is weakening more and more. Today the altar of the true God stands in the place of the bloody altars of Dahomey and false worship of the Mohammedans of Egypt. Every day the blood of the Lamb mystically immolated in the hands of a Catholic missionary purifies the very spot in Abomey, which for three centuries was reddened by the blood of thousands of human victims. The missions of Dahomey, at present, number about 5,000 Catholics, 20 schools with 1,000 pupils, 15 churches and chapels, 14 hospitals. The remainder of these vast regions are now covered with numerous churches and chapels, schools, hospitals, or dispensaries, workshops and semi-

naries of the training of native priests of whom there are quite a number, who are distinguished for their learning and holy zeal. Does not Christianity benefit by such examples of religious and patriotic devotion? Has not the preaching of the Gospel been a strong factor in the abolition of human sacrifices? Nourished by the grace of Christ and watered by the sweat of African missionaries, the seed of which hath come forth and grown little by little in the midst of thorns; beautiful ears have been gleaned.



## CHAPTER XI.

### THE CHURCH AND THE NEGRO IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

In the United States the Catholic Church continues her glorious conquests among the twelve million members of our race. The negro was imported to these shores in 1620; from then until 1865, he was subjected to the most inhuman treatment known among civilized people; devoid in the minds of some, as having neither reason or soul; nothing more, nothing less than beast of burden; denied every right accorded to common humanity; laws were enacted in States controlled by our outside brethren, making it a crime to teach them. His actions were not even his own, even denied the consolation of the Christian, Roman slave, who, amidst all the tortures of merciless pagan masters, found comfort in that which lighteneth the human burden, religion. All the African Fettichism and Voodoism could not have made the Negroe's spiritual condition more deplorable. It is true there were a few who fell in the hands of those, who, notwithstanding the then prevailing opinion, taught the Negro that he had a soul, and he must save it, also there were apostolic men like Bishop England, who not only introduced the first Negro priest in the States, (who owing to the prejudices, and the condition of the Negro, had to return to

Europe) but went out of the way to be of service to the Negro. Such was the Negroe's position when in 1865 the shackles fell from four million of slaves. The Church has been always on the side of the oppressed, we see by the remarkable, Bull of Pope Gregory the Sixteenth. In 1839 "In Supremo apostolatus fastigio." Against the slave trade which did more to put down that infamous traffic, than negotiations and royal prohibitions. But more especially in 1866 did the Holy See, through the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda, sent instruction to the Apostolic Delegate of the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore, concerning the Negro, in which it said: "It is a matter of the gravest importance that we should make provision to gather into the fold of Christ a harvest so great and so exposed to the efforts of our enemies." In accordance with the expressed wishes of the Holy See, the council says, "After mature consideration of the varying circumstances of place, it seems that no single rule should be established for the different dioceses. It appears wiser to leave it to the discernment of the Bishops of each diocese to provide for the Negroes. If it seems more conducive to the salvation of the Negroes to have separate churches built for them, such should be considered praiseworthy. If elsewhere it appear wiser to invite the Negroes to the Churches frequented by the whites, let it be done in a manner that will prudently

avoid accusation, or any pretext of any accusation of the Church." But continues the council, "this especially burdens our conscience, that access be allowed to every one who wishes to come to Christ. Let the sacraments be administered to all who seek them. Let a place be provided, wherein all who wish to hear Mass on Sundays and Holy days. Wherefore, if through negligence this be not done, he shall merit the deepest approbrium who forgetful of his office does not furnish means of salvation to all who seek them, "whether negroes or others, and who may perish because of his negligence." (Baltimore Council Chapter IV.) Those utterances were made when feeling against the Negro was high. In 1886, the Third Plenary Council, in terms more vigorously, if that be possible, "Bishops to have, if necessary separate churches reserved for the Negroes or at least a portion of the white churches reserved for them, or both, according to circumstances; furthermore, to have priests appointed who should devote themselves exclusively to the evangelization of the Negroes. Hence the Church, fearlessly took up the work in the United States, of caring for the spiritual welfare of the Negro, notwithstanding the many difficulties, ignorance, prejudice and poverty being the chief obstacles, yet the mental ignorance and moral ignorance of the Negro is not

more strange or notable in him than in other races that have passed through the same ordeal. The broad gauged sympathy of our dearly beloved Bishops and priests, for the Negro was awakened, and they went forward to combat with the besetting evils and conditions of the Negro. His moral ignorance, which is the absence of Catholic doctrine, his prejudices, inherited from the white non-catholics, against the church, his poverty, the want of an equal chance with his brother in white. The great problems, the gravest of which is before the people of the South. The dealing with the man of one color so as to secure him the rights that no one would grudge him if he were of another color. To solve this problem it is of course, necessary to educate him to perform the duties, a failure to perform which will render him a curse to himself and to all around him. The relation of the two races should be so adjusted the rights of neither be abridged nor jeopardized, that the backward race be trained so that it may enter into the possession of true freedom, while the forward race is enabled to preserve unharmed the standard of civilization which it has wrought out. That the Negro be treated on his worth as a man, grant him no special favors, deny him no proper opportunities; fair and equal justice among all men, and to demand from them in return just and fair treatment for others. The Negro who, against crushing disadvantages,

has by his own industry, energy, self-respect and perseverance struggled upward to position which would entitle him to the respect of his fellows, if only his skin were of a different hue. It is true of the colored man as of the white man, that in the long run his fate must depend far more upon his own effort than upon the efforts of any outside friend. It is encouraging to know how successfully these and other questions have, and are being handled by the Church, and that efforts put in the Negro's behalf have been well expended. But yesterday he was counted on the fingers in the Church, today he numbers over 400,000, yesterday one imported Negro priest, today six pure Negro priests, with many native students preparing for the sacred ministry. Within the last forty years we have had a colored bishop, known as the silver tongued orator of the New England States, the lamented Bishop Healy of Portland, Maine. One of the oldest religious member in the United States is the venerable Brother Innocent of St. Vincent's College, Latrobe, Pa., as well as many Negro students who have won distinction in various Catholic institutions abroad. The great order of St. Benedict, the first, through the efforts of the beloved Archabbott Winner of holy memory, to take so great an interest in the Negro, by receiving him as a member of the Benedictine order, establishing Churches and schools, and educating him abroad has been nobly seconded

by the great work of the Josephites who control over 30,000 of the Negro Catholics; they not only have native or colored priests among their number, but also a number of colored students, they sacrifice every worldly interest for that of the Negro, by taking a special vow never to accept any position in the Church that will interfere with their work of the evangelization of the Negro. Many of the large cities have large congregations with fine schools, colleges, industrial institutions, home for homeless girls, orphanages, and hospitals. There are countless numbers of learned and noble priests, (like Father Burke, of New York and Father Felten, of Louisville) giving their lives to the great and glorious work of gathering up the cheaves. What the Catholic Church has done in past ages certainly can Church, yea her alone that can and will save and will be repeated again. It is the Catholic Church, yea her alone that can and will save us. She alone can bring our immortal souls to the feet of the bleeding Christ, who died for us. She and she alone can, if a problem there be, solve it. If the Negro returns to his rightful home, the Catholic Church can correct him when he is at fault; she will protect him when he is wronged. Her Colossal divine form, her powerful arm and inspired voice none dare resist; she is the friend of the poor and despised of every age, race and clime. In her is our hope, in her our salvation.

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